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NME

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

SMOKEY ROBINSON

ICA ROCK WEEK

STEVE WINWOOD

THE FALL

Train to the Eastern Station / Illustration by Jill Mumford after A. M. Cassandra

TRANS EUROPE EXPRESS

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE CURTAIN TO THE FORBIDDEN ZONES OF EASTERN ROCK BY CHRIS BOHN

NME CHARTS

WEEK ENDING
January 10th, 1981

"When everyone likes you, you've had it." Adam Ant. So farewell then, Adam Ant, all things must pass. Our hearts go out to you at this season of goodwill. After more than three balmy years of being abused and reviled, all this adulation must be kind of hard to take. Pic: Peter Anderson.

UK SINGLES

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in	Highest
1	(17)	**Imagine**	John Lennon (Apple)	2	1
2	(1)	**Starting Over**	John Lennon/Yoko Ono (WEA/Geffen)	8	1
3	(8)	**Antmusic**	Adam & The Ants (CBS)	3	3
4	(3)	**There's No One Quite Like Grandma**	St Winifred's School Choir (MFP)	4	3
5	(2)	**Stop The Cavalry**	Jona Lewie (Stiff)	4	1
6	(12)	**Happy Christmas/War Is Over**	John Lennon/Yoko Ono (Apple)	2	6
7	(4)	**De Do Do Do**	Police (A&M)	4	4
8	(7)	**Runaway Boys**	Stray Cats (Arista)	5	7
9	(5)	**Embarrassment**	Madness (Stiff)	6	3
10	(6)	**Super Trouper**	Abba (Epic)	8	1
11	(11)	**Rabbit**	Chas & Dave (Rockney)	5	11
12	(8)	**Flash**	Queen (EMI)	4	8
13	(19)	**Love On The Rocks**	Neil Diamond (Capitol)	5	13
14	(15)	**To Cut A Long Story Short**	Spandau Ballet (Reformation/Chrysalis)	7	7
15	(10)	**Banana Republic**	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	6	2
16	(18)	**Lies**	Status Quo (Vertigo)	4	13
17	(24)	**Lonely Together**	Barry Manilow (Arista)	4	17
18	(28)	**Do Nothing**	Specials (2-Tone)	2	18
19	(25)	**Too Nice To Talk To**	The Beat (Go-Feet)	3	19
20	(14)	**This Wreckage**	Gary Numan (Beggars Banquet)	2	14
21	(—)	**Burn Rubber On Me**	Gap Band (Mercury)	1	21
22	(13)	**Lady**	Kenny Rogers (UA)	7	11
23	(20)	**Over The Rainbow/You Belong To Me**	Matchbox (Magnet)	2	20
24	(16)	**Do You Feel My Love?**	Eddie Grant (Ensign)	7	8
25	(30)	**The Tide Is High**	Blondie (Chrysalis)	9	1
26	(21)	**Celebration**	Kool & The Gang (De-Lite)	9	5
27	(22)	**Never Mind The Presents**	Barron Knights (Epic)	2	22
28	(26)	**My Girl**	Rod Stewart (Riva)	3	26
29	(—)	**It's Hard To Be Humble**	Mac Davies (Casablanca)	1	29
30	(—)	**I Ain't Gonna Stand For It**	Stevie Wonder (Motown)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER

You're OK — Ottawan (Carrere).
Young Parisiennes — Adam & The Ants (Decca).
Don't Stop The Music — Yarborough & Peoples (Mercury).
Fade To Grey — Visage (Polydor).
Guilty — Streisand / Gibb (CBS).
Happy New Year — Abba (Epic).

US SINGLES

This Week	Last Week		
1	(4)	**Starting Over**	John Lennon/Yoko Ono
2	(1)	**Lady**	Kenny Rogers
3	(3)	**More Than I Can Say**	Leo Sayer
4	(2)	**Master Blaster**	Stevie Wonder
5	(5)	**Another One Bites The Dust**	Queen
6	(7)	**Love On The Rocks**	Neil Diamond
7	(8)	**Hit Me With Your Best Shot**	Pat Benatar
8	(9)	**Hungry Heart**	Bruce Springsteen
9	(10)	**Guilty**	Barbra Streisand/Barry Gibb
10	(13)	**The Tide Is High**	Blondie
11	(12)	**Every Woman In The World**	Air Supply
12	(11)	**Woman In Love**	Barbra Streisand
13	(16)	**Passion**	Rod Stewart
14	(15)	**De Do Do Do De Da Da Da**	The Police
15	(21)	**Celebration**	Kool & The Gang
16	(18)	**Tell It Like It Is**	Heart
17	(6)	**The Wanderer**	Donna Summer
18	(14)	**You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling**	Daryl Hall & John Oates
19	(20)	**Suddenly**	Olivia Newton-John/Cliff Richard
20	(26)	**Hey Nineteen**	Steely Dan
21	(24)	**It's My Turn**	Diana Ross
22	(25)	**I Made It Through The Rain**	Barry Manilow
23	(19)	**Whip It**	Devo
24	(30)	**This Is Time**	Andy Gibb
25	(27)	**I Believe In You**	Don Williams
26	(28)	**One Step Closer**	The Doobie Brothers
27	(32)	**I Love A Rainy Night**	Eddie Rabbitt
28	(22)	**Theme From The Dukes Of Hazzard**	Waylon Jennings
29	(23)	**Everybody's Got To Learn Sometime**	The Korgis
30	(38)	**Miss Sun**	Boz Scaggs

Courtesy 'CASH BOX'

US ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week		
1	(13)	**Double Fantasy**	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
2	(1)	**Greatest Hits**	Kenny Rogers
3	(3)	**Guilty**	Barbra Streisand
4	(4)	**Crimes Of Passion**	Pat Benatar
5	(5)	**Eagles Live**	The Eagles
6	(2)	**Hotter Than July**	Stevie Wonder
7	(7)	**The Game**	Queen
8	(8)	**The Jazz Singer**	Neil Diamond
9	(6)	**The River**	Bruce Springsteen
10	(11)	**Gaucho**	Steely Dan
11	(12)	**Zenyatta Mondatta**	The Police
12	(9)	**Back In Black**	AC/DC
13	(15)	**Autoamerican**	Blondie
14	(17)	**Greatest Hits/Live**	Heart
15	(18)	**Foolish Behaviour**	Rod Stewart
16	(10)	**One Step Closer**	Doobie Brothers
17	(14)	**Triumph**	The Jacksons
18	(22)	**Barry**	Barry Manilow
19	(19)	**Christopher Cross**	Christopher Cross
20	(16)	**Anne Murray's Greatest Hits**	Anne Murray
21	(—)	**Live**	Fleetwood Mac
22	(20)	**Faces**	Earth, Wind & Fire
23	(26)	**The Turn Of A Friendly Card**	The Alan Parsons Project
24	(24)	**Celebrate**	Kool & The Gang
25	(23)	**The Wanderer**	Donna Summer
26	(21)	**Greatest Hits Vol Two**	Linda Ronstadt
27	(31)	**Greatest Hits**	The Doors
28	(25)	**Diana**	Diana Ross
29	(30)	**Making Movies**	Dire Straits
30	(38)	**Hits!**	Boz Scaggs

Courtesy 'CASH BOX'

So farewell then, NTNON, for you too cult status couldn't last. Your album is now riding unfashionably high, but you had a good run for your money. After all, it did take all of three series for observant smart alecs to check the credits and realise you didn't write your own gags.

UK ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in	Highest
1	(2)	**Double Fantasy**	John Lennon (Warner Bros/Geffen)	6	1
1	(1)	**Supertrouper**	Abba (Epic)	7	1
3	(8)	**Not The Nine O'Clock News**	Cast (BBC)	8	3
4	(3)	**Greatest Hits**	Dr Hook (Capitol)	4	3
5	(11)	**Autoamerican**	Blondie (Chrysalis)	6	3
6	(22)	**Kings Of The Wild Frontier**	Adam & The Ants (CBS)	7	6
7	(10)	**Zenyatta Mondatta**	Police (A&M)	15	1
8	(4)	**Barry**	Barry Manilow (Arista)	5	4
9	(5)	**Guilty**	Barbra Streisand (CBS)	12	2
10	(16)	**Absolutely**	Madness (Stiff)	14	2
11	(6)	**Flash Gordon**	Queen (EMI)	2	6
12	(14)	**Manilow Magic**	Barry Manilow (Arista)	21	5
13	(13)	**Jazz Singer**	Neil Diamond (Capitol)	6	8
14	(12)	**20 Golden Greats Of Ken Dodd**	Ken Dodd (Warwick)	3	12
15	(18)	**Classics For Dreaming**	James Last (Polydor)	4	11
16	(19)	**Foolish Behaviour**	Rod Stewart (Riva)	6	3
17	(6)	**Chart Explosion**	Various (K-Tel)	5	6
18	(8)	**Inspirations**	Elvis Presley (K-Tel)	7	6
19	(28)	**Scary Monsters**	David Bowie (RCA)	13	1
20	(27)	**Sandinista!**	The Clash (CBS)	3	20
21	(26)	**Signing Off**	UB40 (Graduate)	13	1
22	(29)	**Slade Smashes**	Slade (Polydor)	2	22
23	(23)	**Hotter Than July**	Stevie Wonder (Motown)	9	1
24	(24)	**Axe Attack**	Various (K-Tel)	3	24
25	(30)	**Best Of Barry Manilow**	Barry Manilow (Polydor)	3	15
26	(—)	**Yes Shows**	Yes (Atlantic)	1	26
27	(—)	**Gaucho**	Steely Dan (MCA)	1	27
28	(—)	**Night Life**	Various (K-Tel)	1	28
29	(17)	**Sound Affects**	The Jam (Polydor)	3	3
30	(25)	**Bright Lights**	Showaddywaddy (Arista)	2	25

BUBBLING UNDER

Everything Is Beautiful — Dana (Warwick).
The Beatles 1962–66 (Parlophone).
Mondo Bongo — Boomtown Rats (Ensign).
Arc Of A Diver — Steve Winwood (Island).
The Beatles 1967–70 (Parlophone).
Imagine — John Lennon (Apple).

INDIES 33s

1. **Gyrate** — Pylon (Armageddon)
2. **Fire Engines** — Fire Engines (Pop Aural)
3. **A Factory Quartet** — Various (Factory)
4. **Are You Glad To Be In America?** — James Blood Ulmer (Rough Trade)
5. **Pin Drop** — Passage (Object)
6. **Grotesque** — The Fall (Rough Trade)
7. **Vaultage 80** — Various (Attrix)
8. **Claws** — Hybrid Kids (Cherry Red)
9. **Personal Troubles And Public Issues** — The Wall (Fresh)
10. **Closer** — Joy Division (Factory)

INDIES 45s

1. **Its Obvious/Diet** — Au Pairs (Human)
2. **Try** — Delta 5 (Rough Trade)
3. **Politics** — Girls At Our Best (Rough Trade)
4. **Solitude 12"** — Various (LKJ)
5. **Animal Space** — Slits Human
6. **Guilty/Dub** — Honey Bane (HB)
7. **At Last I'm Free** — Robert Wyatt (Rough Trade)
8. **Simply Thrilled Honey** — Orange Juice (Post Card)
9. **Girls Don't Count** — Section 25 (Factory)
10. **Flight 12"** — A Certain Ratio (Factory)

Chart by: Paul at Bonaparte, 284 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

REGGAE

1. **Cruisin'** — Outer Limits (TJ)
2. **Walk On By** — Motion (Blue Inc)
3. **Simply In Love** — Carroll Thompson (Santic)
4. **You're A Liar** — Al Campbell (Big Youth)
5. **Love Between A Boy And Girl** — Chosen Few (Love and Inity)
6. **You're The One** — Tropical Breeze (Daddy Kool)
7. **Paradise** — Jean Adebambo (Santic)
8. **If You See My Mary** — Gregory Isaacs (African Museum)
9. **Show And Tell** — Freddy McKay (Soferno B)
10. **Someone Special** — Dennis Brown (Yvonne's Special)

Chart by: Bluebird Records, 155 Church Street, London W.2.

DISCO

1. **Do You Feel My Love?** — Eddy Grant (Ensign)
2. **I Wanna Be With You** — Coffee (De Lite)
3. **Rise & Shine** — Linx (Chrysalis)
4. **Celebration** — Kook & the Gang (De Lite)
5. **Burn Rubber On Me** — Gap Band (Mercury)
6. **I'm Coming Out** — Diana Ross (Motown)
7. **I Shot The Sherriff** — Light Of The World (Ensign)
8. **Don't Stop The Music** — Yarborough & Peoples (Mercury)
9. **Inherit The Wind** — Wilton Felder (MCA)
10. **Groove On** — Willy Beaver Hale (TK)

Chart by: Rainbow Soul Roadshow, 01-368 9852.

5 YEARS AGO

1. **Bohemian Rhapsody** — Queen (EMI)
2. **Let's Twist Again/The Twist** — Chubby Checker (London)
3. **The Trail Of The Lonesome Pine** — Laurel & Hardy (United Artists)
4. **Glass Of Champagne** — Sailor (Epic)
5. **I Believe In Father Christmas** — Greg Lake (Manticore)
6. **Happy To Be On An Island In The Sun** — Demis Roussos (Philips)
7. **Art For Art's Sake** — 10cc (Mercury)
8. **Wide Eyed And Legless** — Andy Fairweather-Low (A&M)
9. **It's Gonna Be A Cold Cold Christmas** — Dana (GTO)
10. **Golden Years** — David Bowie (RCA)

Week ending January 10, 1976

10 YEARS AGO

1. **Grandad** — Clive Dunn (Columbia)
2. **When I'm Dead And Gone** — McGuiness Flint (Capitol)
3. **Ride A White Swan** — T. Rex (Fly)
4. **I Hear You Knocking** — Dave Edmunds (MAM)
5. **I'll Be There** — Jackson Five (Tamla Motown)
6. **It's Only Make Believe** — Glen Campbell (Capitol)
7. **Cracklin' Rosie** — Neil Diamond (UNI)
8. **Nothing Rhymed** — Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM)
9. **(Blame It On The) Pony Express** — Johnny Johnson & The Bandwagon (Bell)
10. **Home Loving Man** — Andy Williams (CBS)

Week ending January 13, 1971

15 YEARS AGO

1. **Keep On Running** — Spencer Davis (Fontana)
2. **Day Tripper/We Can Work It Out** — Beatles (Parlophone)
3. **The River** — Ken Dodd (Columbia)
4. **My Ship Is Coming In** — Walker Brothers (Philips)
5. **The Carnival Is Over** — The Seekers (Columbia)
6. **Let's Hang On** — Four Seasons (Phillips)
7. **Spanish Flea** — Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass (Pye Int)
8. **Till The End Of The Day** — Kinks (Pye)
9. **A Must To Avoid** — Herman's Hermits (Columbia)
10. **Rescue Me** — Fontella Bass (Chess)

Week ending January 12, 1966

20 YEARS AGO

1. **Poetry In Motion** — Johnny Tillotson (London)
2. **I Love You** — Cliff Richard (Columbia)
3. **Save The Last Dance For Me** — Drifters (London)
4. **It's Now Or Never** — Elvis Presley (RCA)
5. **Perfidia** — Ventures (London)
6. **Portrait Of My Love** — Matt Monro (Parlophone)
7. **Counting Teardrops** — Emile Ford (Pye)
8. **Lonely Pup** — Adam Faith (Parlophone)
9. **Goodness Gracious Me** — Peter Sellers/Sophia Loren (Parlophone)
10. **Blue Angel** — Roy Orbison (London)

Week ending January 13, 1961

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS
NME
THE DRINKING PERSON'S BEANO

31
17

7
12

NEWS DEREK JOHNSON THRILLS CYNTHIA ROSE

A BREAKING-UP-IS-EASY-TO-DO SPECIAL

Lonesome Joe

THE JOE JACKSON BAND has split following drummer Dave Houghton's decision to quit the band due to personal reasons.

Jackson has decided to re-think his own future activities, and has now decided to free himself from the responsibility of a permanent band, opting instead for a number of different projects — including the production of an album for The Keys, a recent A&M signing, plus others "which are not necessarily involved with music".

The now defunct band had worked with Jackson for three years, appearing on as many albums. They played their last show in Utrecht, Holland, during December and this was recorded by a Dutch mobile studio for possible release by A&M.

Acoustic Graham?

IS IT ALL over now between Graham Parker and The Rumour?

Reliable sources this week claimed that the relationship was now at an end and that The Rumour were heading to the States to work with Brooklyn-born singer-songwriter Garland Jeffries for the whole of '81. Meanwhile it's understood that Parker, who recently got married, was drafting new plans — including the making of an acoustic album, which may or may not be for Stiff.

Stiff, however, claim that no rift exists between Parker and The Rumour. "I don't know the band's exact plans," stated a spokesperson for the label, "though it is true that Steve Goulding and Andrew Bodnar worked on the sessions for Garland Jeffries' next album.

"Certainly though there are no problems between Stiff and Graham himself. We don't have an eight or 10 album contract with him or anything like that but he knows that anytime he wants to come up with an album we're always interested in releasing it."

Nevertheless, the split between Parker and the band would appear to be a fact.

Subterranean Glen

THE SPECTRES, the band led by Glen Matlock and ex-TRB guitarist Danny Kustow, have temporarily shelved activities following the departure of Kustow and fellow TRB expatriot, keyboardist Mark Ambler.

Kustow cited "fear of flying" as one of his reasons for leaving. Matlock had decided to concentrate the band's activities in the US with their recent East Coast tour to be followed by a West Coast assault in early spring. Kustow's reluctance to travel by air means that The Spectres remain a band in name only.

Matlock himself has now begun rehearsing with The Subterraneans, the Nick Kent-initiated band, rounding out the group to a four-piece. A keyboards player is being auditioned and the Subs seem likely to commence regular gigging at the end of the month, though Matlock is shaping his commitments so that his solo career and Spectres-evolved work can still continue when necessary.

DATA CONTROL

Rats play Rainbow
Extra Springsteen dates

TOUR NEWS, RECORD NEWS, ETC. P.26-30

Sorry Joe, can't help you. Never could remember those guys' names. . . *Pic: Stevenson*

Costello Squeezes into studio

SQUEEZE, who recently appeared at the Birmingham Exhibition Centre supergig with ex-Ace keyboardsman Paul Carrack occupying the seat vacated by Jools Holland, are now in the studio working on their new album, which is being produced by Elvis Costello.

The Costello involvement lends credence to the story that Squeeze are soon to be involved in a management switch which will see the band parting with Police svengali Miles Copeland and being handled instead by Jake Riviera, who is said to be keen to see the band appearing on his F-Beat label, though they are apparently firmly pacted to A&M.

Meanwhile Jools Holland and his new band The Millionaires have been piecing tracks together with the aid of producer Pete Wingfield. Chris Difford has provided lyrics for half the material so far recorded.

Bunnies look for gig site. *Pic: Joe Stevens*

Bunnymen take to the hills

ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN are to play a special one-off free gig at an undisclosed location somewhere in the Peak District on Saturday, January 17.

The performance, which is to be filmed as part of a movie titled *They Shine So Hard* featuring the Bunnymen, is being organised by Zoo Records, who will forward passes for the show to all fans sending an SAE to The Zoo, 1 Chicago Buildings, Whitechapel, Liverpool 1. The passes will also include instructions on how to get to the mystery location.

For those without transport, Zoo are also organising a series of coaches from London, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds. Fares are £5 return from London, and £3 for the other four cities, and coach tickets and passes are available from the following agents in each city: London, Virgin Megastore Ticket Kiosk; Liverpool, Penny Lane Records; Manchester, Piccadilly Records; Sheffield, Virgin Records; and Leeds, Virgin Records.

This performance, which will also be recorded for a soundtrack album, will be the band's last appearance in Britain for some months.

Kampuchea set

Now scheduled for February release is 'UNICEF' the long awaited live double-album presenting much of the music performed in the recently screened *Rock For Kampuchea* TV show. Side one of the album features tracks by The Who, side two is split between The Pretenders, Elvis Costello and Rockpile, with Robert Plant, while side three contains tracks by Queen, Clash, Ian Dury and The Specials, the final side being devoted to Wings and the all-star Rockestra. Probable price for the set is £5.00.

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Bruce bashes the bootleggers

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN was awarded over two million dollars in damages against a bottlegger in a Los Angeles court last week. Loser in the case was Andrea Ellen Waters, also known as Andrea Brown and Vickie Vinyl, who was found guilty of infringing 43 separate copyrights, each charge carrying a fine of 50,000 dollars.

The case followed a 1979 raid on a warehouse used by Waters, where FBI agents found and later destroyed many tons of bootleg albums and equipment. Previously Waters had offered a catalogue of bootlegs which included nine different albums by the Stones, plus records by David Bowie, The Beatles, Boston, Eric Clapton, Peter Gabriel, Fleetwood Mac, Elvis Presley, Sex Pistols, Iggy Pop, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, Kiss and many others. 26,000 copies of the Springsteen boots 'Fire', 'Piece De Resistance', 'E-Ticket' and 'Winterland '78' were among those confiscated.

The defence argued that Springsteen himself had openly encouraged bootlegging activities, stating on a 1978 broadcast: "Bootleggers, roll your tapes, cause this is a good one!", and speaking in favour of bootlegging in the periodical *Hot Wacks*. But the judge rejected these arguments and now further problems loom for Waters, who is said to have amassed over a quarter of a million dollars in her bank balance. For she is also defendant in yet another criminal action case where a further 17 counts of musical copyright infringement are to be brought against her.

"Guess who's coming to dinner, dear . . ." "Oh not that terrible Campaign For Homosexual Equality militant Monty again? He bored the knickers off everyone in sight at Deirdre's do."

RINGING IN THE OLD

THANK GOD Christmas is over. Maybe now the schedules will revert to some kind of normalcy — you know, show the occasional programme that's actually worth watching.

The Festive Season was certainly a long time going: two decent films **(The Front Page** and **The Godfather)** and one decent 'special' **(The Likely Lads,** a six-year-old repeat) amidst the gunge and goo. And that's ignoring ITV, which I usually do because those ads really do get on my tits.

New Year's Eve was a complete washout too — the choice between **Kenny Everett** and hordes of drunken Scotsmen is, frankly, no choice at all, but what do you expect? You're supposed to be out in the streets causing trouble — but 1981 started right.

The funny thing is, the New Year was celebrated by various studies of Old People. Take **The Pied Piper Of Hamelin,** another expert animation from the estimable Cosgrove-Hall studios. Adapted from the poem by Robert Browning (you can't get much older than Browning — he's dead), it was a stirring half-hour: the puppetry was breathtaking, frequently sinister (the rats looked real enough to eat), and the narration by Robert Hardy hit a perfect tone of controlled, moralistic hysteria.

Another dead person, alas, is **Joyce Grenfell.** While **Papillon** underwent all manner of indignities on BBC 1, the lovely Ms Grenfell was fondly remembered on BBC 2. It was the shortest hour's TV I've seen in a long time. The only thing wrong with it was the occasional lapse into pseud-speak from some of the recollecting contributors. Clive James, for instance, insisted on saying things like 'Her humour was universal, as is all humour."

Joyce, of course, was very well able to speak for herself and she did so, to sublime effect, in several excerpts from the archives. What an extraordinary actress! As funny as Peter Sellers, almost, and as sorely missed — even the fact that Joyce was a Christian Scientist didn't put me off her. She just seemed right, that's all.

What seemed wrong was **In This Your Honour** (BBC2), a tribute to the Queen Mother. What does it mean? Is it like somebody in court being asked what the stolen goods were in, and he replies "In this, your honour". Oh well, somebody must've watched it.

Probably a good few of the old dears in **Man Alive** (BBC 2), that's for sure. *Wouldn't It Be Luvverly!* was a genuinely shocking programme, a sequel to last October's *The Old Can't Run Fast Enough.* That spotlighted the plight of elderly victims of vicious muggings on Merseyside; this highlighted their grand day trip to London, including a slap-up meal at Moira Lister's Belgravia home and a special performance of *My Fair Lady* in the West End.

What was so disturbing — aside from the obviously distressing statistics about urban crime — was the way in which everyone (actor Tony Britton excluded) addressed these ancient survivors as though they were talking to retarded children: "And how old are you, dear? Oh, that's nice. Eat up your chicken then." It must be something to do with the size of old people, I suppose, that they appear to be literally shrivelled.

Yes, they are wrinkled and the broken bones they've suffered at the hands of peculiarly heartless criminals will never heal — it's something to do with OLD AGE. It shouldn't be shyed away from, it shouldn't be patronised, but by Christ it is.

Another grand old lady is Connie Chatterley. Twenty years ago she was defending herself in **The Trial Of Lady Chatterley** (BBC 1); the nominal prisoner at the bar was Penguin Books Ltd, publishers of the D.H. Lawrence novel which was deemed by the Crown to be obscene, but the fictional Connie was the real villain — an intelligent, articulate woman who undertook sexual relationships with men other than her dullard husband. ADULTERESS! In 1960 this was a serious business. Never mind that the unexpurgated hardback edition of Lawrence's (not very good) book had long been available to those with more money than sense. Penguin wanted to publish it at 3s 6d (17½p) in paperback; the hoi polloi would get their dirty mitts on it! And, after a protracted and extremely silly trial (not to mention costly — Penguin forked out £13,000 costs for the privilege of winning the case), they did.

As chief prosecutor Mervyn Griffith-Jones, Edward Woodward was quite brilliant; venomous when reading passages from the book, all but choking on the 'forbidden' words, utterly disdainful when dealing with the 'literary experts' called in its defence.

"Would you leave it lying around the house?" he asked of the jury. "Is it a book you'd allow your wives and servants to read?" October 1960, and England didn't make much sense then, either.

Arena (BBC 2) was a laugh too; all about the Chelsea Hotel in New York. Lots of poofs and celebrities live there (Andy Warhol, William Burroughs, Quentin Crisp, etc.) and they effortlessly demonstrated how vastly superior they all are to us lesser mortals. There was Viva (or was it Nico? — all these leggy NY superstars look alike to me) showing her daughter a video tape of her birth; wow. Great stylists, man. You've got to admit that.

The Beatles were great stylists, so they tell me. No, I've got to own up, I remember them and I think they sounded OK. **The Birth Of The Beatles** (BBC 1) brought back no memories at all. Admittedly, I'd had a couple (it was New Year's Eve) but I couldn't work out what was going on at all. The very least that Stephen Mackenna, Rod Culbertson, John Altman and Ryan Michael (the unfortunates who were playing The Beatles) could've done was wear bloody great sandwich boards with John, Paul, George and Ringo written on them. Still, at least Brian Epstein was portrayed as an extremely sensitive human being and Rain's renditions of the Lennon-McCartney songbook was nearly as good as those old Embassy records you could get from Woolworths.

The Technical Adviser, by the way, was Pete Best, which might explain lines like "But Pete's the one the girls all go for — they camp out in his garden." He happened to be portrayed by a dead ringer for a youthful Rock Hudson, as well. Take the money and run, that's what I say, Pete.

Memory's a funny thing, though. Which is why I can barely recall **The History Man** (BBC 2). Apparently it's a spot-on satire of trendy university radicalism in the early '70s, but as I've never been a student or an academic the object of the exercise escapes me. Anthony Sher plays Howard Kirk, the sociology lecher reading radical chic cliches and extra-curricular intercourse. You know it's 1972 because people talk about Rhodesia, charisma, decimal currency and abortion, the campus graffiti includes "Eric is Derek", and Howard wears a Zappa moustache above his granny T-shirt.

Poor Howard has to endure lines like "You've a problem, Howard — your wife understands you." Now this would've been funny had James Bolam said it to Rodney Bewes. But there's humour for you — like higher education, the legal system and old age, it's utterly elusive.

DANGEROUS

Kid-at-heart MONTY SMITH watches the grown-ups at play

Left: Antony Sher and Geraldine James as History People. Below: Edward Woodward

Left: Swiss and Belgian Cavern Mecca members lured by that authentic Fab feel. Pic: David Vella

ALL YOU NEED IS . . . RISING DAMP?

By MARTIN PLIMMER

IF KNITTING could bring John Lennon back to life then Liz Hughes' homely labour of love, witnessed in woolly letters reading "Beatles Forever" on the fronts of hundreds of brightly coloured jumpers, wouldn't seem at all eccentric.

As it is the jumpers each take her a week of myopic evenings to knit and she sells them for a give-away £10. She and her husband Jim are intensely dedicated to preserving the memory of The Beatles and their reward is not profit but the knowledge that the Fab Four are neatly enshrined in our hearts — a memory as dear as Dunkirk.

"We're not Beatles fanatics," said Liz, "but we feel that they belong to us somehow."

Liz and Jim have closed their Beatles memorabilia shop and mail order business, The Magical Mystery Store, to invest all their time and profits into the Cavern Mecca — a Beatles museum, shop and meeting place which boasts a scale replica of the original Cavern Club. This mock cellar bar is up a flight of stairs in Mathew Street, Liverpool, just a couple of doors from the site of the original Cavern, now an NCP car park.

The Cavern Mecca opened to the faithful on Saturday for the first time. Liz and Jim welcomed some of their 2,000 mail order customers who had made the trip from Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, clutching their autograph books and cameras. "They're all friends, if you know what I mean," said Liz, "more than just customers."

Liverpool itself is seemingly indifferent to The Beatles. Despite the hundreds of tourists who visit each year to unscrew the name plates of Penny Lane, the city isn't interested in its '60s heritage. Liverpudlians only raised £300 in three years towards an appeal for a £40,000 statue of the Fabs. It's this lack of local concern which galvanised Liz and Jim into building the Cavern Mecca.

They raised the mock arches and vaulted ceiling at weekends and evenings with voluntary labour, referring to ex-Cavern DJ Bob Wooler for authentic details they had forgotten.

They saved prize Beatle relics from the shop — a plastic model kit of Ringo, "wildest skins in town," Beatles wallpaper and tights — to put on display and they grieved over past sales of Beatles gems to rich foreigners. A collage by Stu Sutcliffe, the visitors' book to Brian Epstein's NEMS record shop and other prize items have all passed through their hands at one time and are now lost overseas forever. Their shrine is open from Tuesday to Saturday and entry is 30p. If they make money, Jim and Liz want to start a Beatles Tourist Board running guided tours to Strawberry Fields.

Liz sped from fan to fan on Saturday thrusting pate sandwiches into mouths opened wide with wonder. On the mock stage a band with the unimaginative name of Abbey Road regurgitated the Fab Hits. Pathetically, the most euphoric (and oldest) members of the audience were Bob Wooler and the first Beatles manager Allan Williams, whose main claim to fame was dropping the group before they became famous. Both late arrivals from the pub, they bathed magnanimously in the reflected glory, signing autographs for queues of Common Market teenagers.

The walls of the Cavern Mecca are made of hardboard, but when it's wet, says Liz delightedly, water drips down the inside. Just like the real thing. Funnily enough, it only needed a glimpse of the fake band over the heads of the Belgian fans and through the plaster arches as they lurched into 'Love Me Do', for a lump to come into the throat. I celebrated the memory with a cup of tea and left.

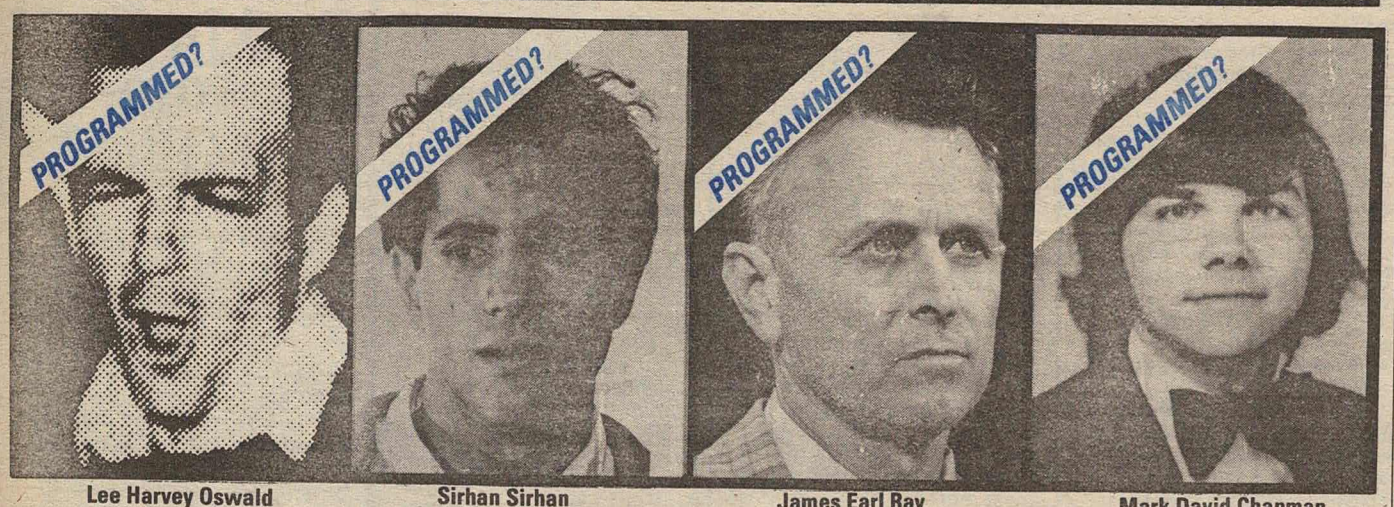
Kent sees double

by DAEVID ESSEX

NICK KENT, the newly-launched *Daily Mirror* pop writer, is reported "absolutely stark bonkers furious" with a writer of the same name who for some years has covered the rock beat for *NME*.

The *Mirror* star, featured in last Friday's issue with a stunningly evocative centre spread on The Boomtown Rats dressed up in Hawaiian shirts, is alleged to have told a tippling Fleet Street acquaintance: "This other bloke's a ruddy imposter. And he's ruining my career. Do you know I've been asked by valued friends in the trade whether I'm actually hacking it for that queer little *NME* ragpaper. The answer is no. And I want the world informed."

The *NME* correspondent of the same name tells *Thrills* that while "more than flattered" to be associated with the *Mirror* stylist, he "wouldn't want to claim kudos that weren't fairly earned, like."



Lee Harvey Oswald — Sirhan Sirhan — James Earl Ray — Mark David Chapman

Four lone killers who shook the world — or four micro-chipped maniacs?

WAS LENNON SHOT TO ORDER?

By ANDREW TYLER
Research: JOHN MICHAEL

BIZARRE THEORIES linking the assassination of John Lennon to U.S. naval and air force intelligence agencies are gaining credence both in the US and in Britain.

Leader in the field is an organisation calling itself Alternative Information Service. In a three-page communique carrying no issuing address or phone number, AIS claimed last week that Lennon's murderer Mark Chapman worked for a top secret intelligence unit "which has a department in Hawaii associated with the Pearl Harbour naval complex." Chapman, it will be remembered, lived on the neighbouring island of Honolulu and it was there he purchased the .38 Charter Arms gun with which he killed Lennon.

Any shocking crime generates its share of high-flown theories. We shoot fearlessly for the most macabre of the lot — that Mark Chapman is actually a robot . . .

The motive behind the slaying, says AIS, was to protect the Cruise and Trident nuclear missile programmes in Europe and the underground MX system planned for the American South West, worth an estimated 1,000 billion dollors in defence contracts.

Although Lennon had been politically "quiet" for some years, US service chiefs had, claims AIS, been "watching closely Lennon's return to recording" and had been "worried he would use his powerful influence in the cause of peace", thus wrecking youthful confidence in the nuclear arms programme.

Chapman, supposedly, was a tool of the military.

As ludicrous as the plot first seems, it is beginning to be repeated and embroidered upon by various independent investigators contacted by *NME* both here and in the US.

Robert Eringer — author of *Global Manipulators*, an inquiry into worldwide corporatism — reports from New York that Chapman is beginning to be classed in the same "lone nut" mould as Lee Harvey Oswald, Sirhan Sirhan and James Earl Ray. . .alleged assailants of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King respectively.

Eighty per cent of the US population, according to a 1976 national poll, now believe those traumatic deaths were part of a conspiracy, even if the true dimension and reasons for the plot can still only be guessed at.

The similarities between Chapman, Oswald, Sirhan and James Earl Ray will soon be the subject of a series of radio investigations by Mae Brussell, whose Dialog Conspiracy programme goes out regularly from Carmel, California.

OUR OWN ENQUIRIES show that naval and air force intelligence units were long ago confirmed to be involved in assassination plots involving brutal and thorough conditioning of agents.

An intriguing admission to this effect came in a clanger dropped to *Sunday Times* writer Peter Watson in July 1975. It was at a NATO conference in Oslo that US Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Narut admitted to Watson that US naval intelligence had taken convicted murderers from military prisons, conditioned them as political assassins, then placed them in American embassies around the world. . .notably in Athens.

Narut claimed he was personally involved with such programmes — but later argued he was talking "theoretically", while US naval sources in London referred to the commander's "personal problems".

In fact the US navy's "conditioning" experiments go back to at least the late 1940s. It was at that time, according to CIA documents released under the Freedom of Information Act, that several branches of the US intelligence community collaborated on a huge mind control programme known through its various phases under the code names Project Bluebird, Operation Artichoke and MKDELTA, MKULTRA.

Training and research teams were set up to investigate all manner of control possibilities, ranging from hypnotism to electro shock therapy, psychology and pharmaceuticals.

Most of the drug projects come under the operating authority of the US navy with investigative headquarters at Bethesda Naval Hospital, Maryland.

The CIA report defines the objective in Maryland as "seeking to isolate and synthesize pure drugs for the use in affecting psychological entry and control of the individual".

Whether or not this control was achieved under the programme — apparently discontinued in 1972 — is still not answered with any satisfaction.

But it is possible for humans to become complete robots? In their book *The Mind Manipulators*, Scheflin and Opton refer to "the powerful and formidable" control weapons now at the disposal of government but ultimately doubt that "robot man" is anything more than an escapist myth.

Walter Bowart, in his book *operation mind control*, asserts that "programmed agents" are already a reality and that "there exists in the US the technology for the creation of the perfect slave state". But like Scheflin and Opton, he is unconvinced that the more exotic assassination theories have any foundation in fact.

Bowart tells of first being alerted to the conditioning syndrome when a friend he'd known for many years returned from the air force after a tour of duty unable to recall many salient details of his term. After intensive psychotherapy Bowart claims the friend discovered "he'd been hypnotised and conditioned. His mind had been made, then remade; his mind had been controlled."

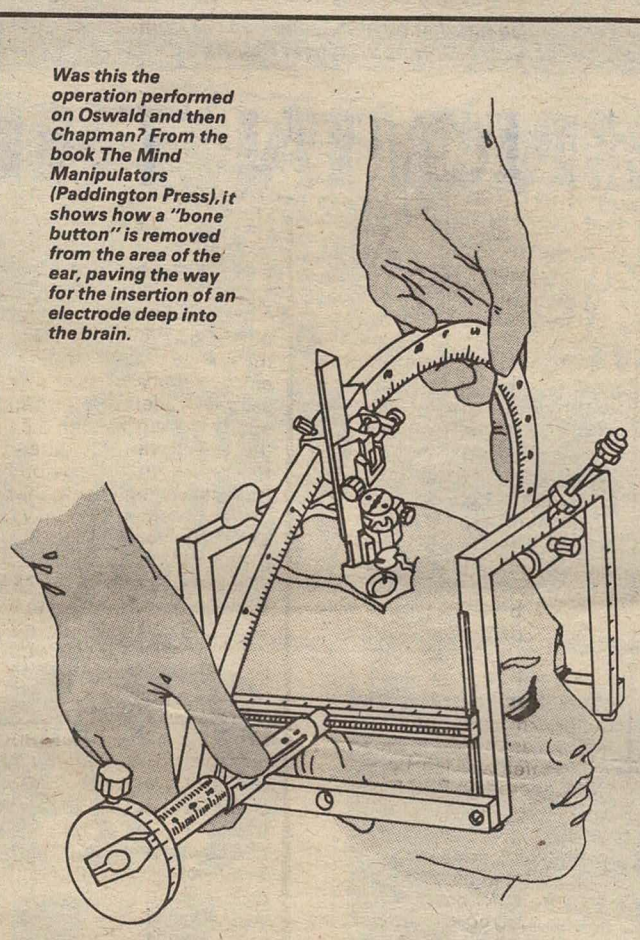
More naval/air force inrigue is found in the experiments of controversial researcher Jose Delgado. His experimental work on mind control through electrical stimulation of the brain (ESB) has been largely financed — according to Scheflin and Opton — by the office of Naval Research and the US Air Forces.

By implanting tiny electrodes into the brain, Delgado has been able to regulate both human and animal behaviour in stunning ways. He was able, for example, to stop a fighting bull running headlong towards him by pushing the button on a portable stimulator. The animal skidded to a halt, turned and rotated hopelessly in circles.

Delgado claims also to have stimulated violent tantrums in a woman patient and eliminated "incurable" pain in another. "The technology for non-sensory communication between brains and computers through the intact skin is already at our fingertips," he reports, "and the consequences are difficult to predict."

THE IDEA that Mark Chapman was an ESB-stimulated stooge acting on electro impulses was not too preposterous to be forwarded in London this week by one politically radical group,

■ *Continues over*



Was this the operation performed on Oswald and then Chapman? From the book The Mind Manipulators (Paddington Press), it shows how a "bone button" is removed from the area of the ear, paving the way for the insertion of an electrode deep into the brain.

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Carry On Conspiring

■ *From previous page*

which declines to be identified.

The theme, in any case, is relatively an old one.

In 1967, author Lincoln Lawrence published a book called *Were We Controlled?* in which he asked the rhetorical question: Was Lee Harvey Oswald a robot assassin programmed by a sophisticated technique known as RHIC-EDOM (Radio Hypnotic Intra-Cerebral Control Electronic Dissolution Of Memory)?

Lawrence claimed that on a trip to Minsk, Russia, Oswald had a small electrode implainted inside his mastoid sinus: "The electrode responded to a radio signal which would make audible, inside Oswald's head, certain electronic commands to which he was already psycho-hypnotically conditioned to respond". And built into the programme was a "forget" capability that would leave Oswald with no knowledge of the awful act he had committeed in Dallas. (According Bowart in *Operation Mind Control,* the Dallas autopsy report on Oswald noted a small scar on the mastoid sinus behind the ear).

RHIC-EDOM again surfaced in 1975 when a 350-page file on the subject, apparently prepared by the CIA after the murder of President Kennedy, was handed to Tennessee journalist James L. Moore.

Moore claims to have received it from two men identifying themselves as former CIA operatives, and quoted one of his un-named sources as saying: "It's pretty obvious that Jack Ruby was programmed to kill Oswald. . .As for Sirhan, there is no other explanation. It's a proven fact that his memory has been completely erased."

Is there any similarity between Chapman and the other lone assassins? It is still too early to know anything more than the sketchiest details of the man, although like his infamous predecessors Chapman apparently telegraphed his intentions when he signed himself "John Lennon" on the day he left his job as security guard at the 444 Nahua condominium. Oswald, James Earl Ray and Sirhan all left incriminating diaries and underlinings in books and other evidence of their guilt.

Each man had a history of mental instability. Each committed his crime in a public place.

Chapman, like Oswald and Sirhan, appeared to be at least two kinds of people. . .good and bad. . .confused and lucid. Oswald was described as variously as a lousy shot and a good shot, a non-driver and a driver, and anti-communist, a pro-communist.

Sirhan was characterised by his court-appointed phsychiatrist as a confused individual of low intelligence. Yet his psychiatrist at San Quentin maintains him to be a man of exceedingly high IQ and suggests he has been the victim of conditioning techniques.

Chapman likewise slips into conflicting phases. "One hell of a nice kid" is how a former workmate described him. "A jerk, a creep, just a negative person" according to an acquaintence who knew him for about six months in 1979.

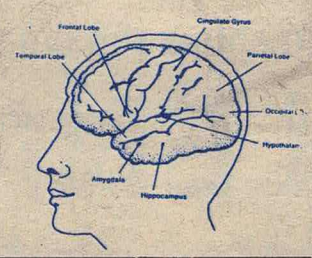
PERHAPS THE MOST inexplicable aspect of the Chapman case is the pre-meditated, highly costly nature of his crime — estimated by Alternative Information Service at around £1,500. "This seems a lot for an unemployed guard to spend on a murder mission against someone he's never met."

AIS and others maintain his behaviour accords with that of a hired killer as opposed to a man in the throes of dementia.

It seems the defence version will be that the Lennon murder was the work of a Beatle fan caught up in a tragic double fantasy in which he believed himself to be the real Lennon and his victim the imposter.

The assassination of John Lennon has convulsed Americans like no event since the death of Jack and Robert Kennedy. Curious for a pop singer perhaps, but then Lennon had a hold on his generation that was at least equal to that of Joe Kennedy's boys.

Conspiracy or no conspiracy, emotions have now been roused to the point where it's going to be easily believed that a nondescript 'nut' from Decatur, Georgia, could possibly wipe out John Lennon. . .not unless the murder was part of some great invisible plan, a drama on a scale befitting a man of the ex-Beatle's stature.



Red faces for Stan and Ollie?

By ROY CARR

YOU MAY KNOW the boast, the impossible we can do right away — miracles take a little longer. Well it seems that Philadelphia-based BJA Productions have set themselves up as miracle-workers and plan a cinematographic first by this time next year: transforming existing black and white film into colour!

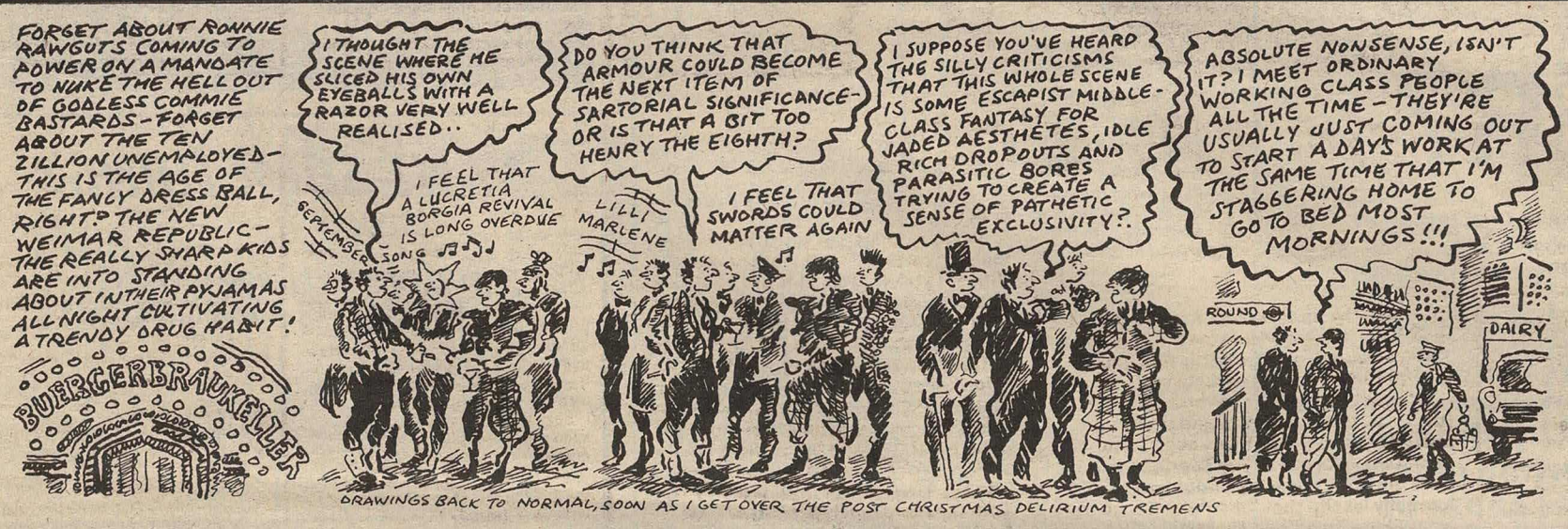
The man behind this trick-of-the-light endeavour is one Alan Douglas, who is currently 'creating' a full-colour feature length movie starring Laurel and Hardy to be called *The Dance Of The Cuckoos* (also the title of their famous one-foot-in-the-gutter-the-other-on-the-kerb theme tune), it will be constructed by dovetailing complete individual scenes carefully selected from 75 original Hal Roach productions.

Once this has been edited, the black and white film will be transferred to video tape and then (using a computer) onto 1,100 line video tape and finally back onto film for public viewing.

Those who have seen a sample screening claim the colour definition to be perfect. Furthermore, this complex computerised process not only affords the movie-makers the opportunity to paint the final print in whichever way they choose, but to also take the original soundtrack, separate and clean up the voices, music and sound effects and then — as planned — add a new score and appropriate noises.

Another nice mess and no mistake!

NOT ONLY ROCK & ROLL — LOWRY


FORGET ABOUT RONNIE RAYGUNS COMING TO POWER ON A MANDATE TO NUKE THE HELL OUT OF GODLESS COMMIE BASTARDS - FORGET ABOUT THE TEN ZILLION UNEMPLOYED - THIS IS THE AGE OF THE FANCY DRESS BALL, RIGHT? THE NEW WEIMAR REPUBLIC - THE REALLY SHARP KIDS ARE INTO STANDING ABOUT IN THEIR PYJAMAS ALL NIGHT CULTIVATING A TRENDY DRUG HABIT!
BUERGERBRAUKELLER
I THOUGHT THE SCENE WHERE HE SLICED HIS OWN EYEBALLS WITH A RAZOR VERY WELL REALISED..
I FEEL THAT A LUCRETIA BORGIA REVIVAL IS LONG OVERDUE
SEPTEMBER SONG
DO YOU THINK THAT ARMOUR COULD BECOME THE NEXT ITEM OF SARTORIAL SIGNIFICANCE - OR IS THAT A BIT TOO HENRY THE EIGHTH?
LILLI MARLENE
I FEEL THAT SWORDS COULD MATTER AGAIN
I SUPPOSE YOU'VE HEARD THE SILLY CRITICISMS THAT THIS WHOLE SCENE IS SOME ESCAPIST MIDDLE-CLASS FANTASY FOR JADED AESTHETES, IDLE RICH DROPOUTS AND PARASITIC BORES TRYING TO CREATE A SENSE OF PATHETIC EXCLUSIVITY?.
ABSOLUTE NONSENSE, ISN'T IT? I MEET ORDINARY WORKING CLASS PEOPLE ALL THE TIME - THEY'RE USUALLY JUST COMING OUT TO START A DAY'S WORK AT THE SAME TIME THAT I'M STAGGERING HOME TO GO TO BED MOST MORNINGS!!!
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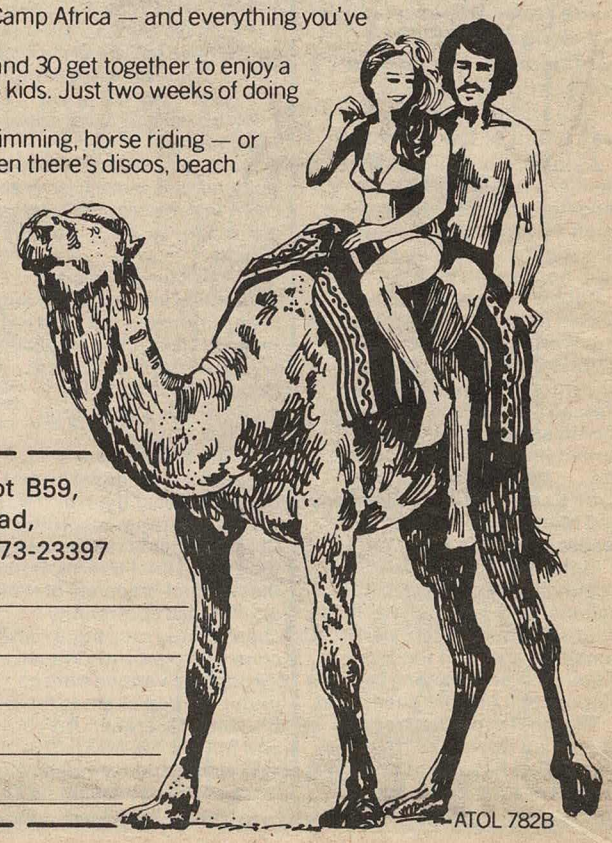

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Stray Cat Brian Setzer (front) and The Bloodless Pharoahs — before his quiff mutated and the boy ran away to London. Pic: Joe Stevens

BIRTH OF THE COOL

By RICHARD GRABEL

RECOGNISE THAT carefully sculpted young quiff in the foreground? Yep, it's Stray Cat Brian Setzer, caught here posing in front of Max's Kansas City circa 1978 with his first band, The Bloodless Pharoahs.

Brian had just begun wearing his hair swept up and was about to start experimenting with crazy colour — though the year before, The Bloodless Pharoahs had made their NY debut at Max's in full glitter Dolls regalia. Brian had sported a blue polyester dress and dyed blonde hair. He'd later say he meant it as a send-up.

Pharoahs front man Ken Kennelly wrote obscure, mysticism-steeped lyrics that gave the band an arty Roxy Music type aura. But it was Brian who gave the band its sparkle and guts. His playing in the Pharoahs was not rockabilly — though Brian, his younger brother Gary (the Pharoahs' drummer) and their bassist played out as a rockabilly band, billing themselves as The Top Cats.

At the time, speaking about image, Kennelly let slip that "the thing I'm going for is like, a Fitzgerald character, beautiful and damned. A rich, decadent person who is going to fall off a cliff someday."

Brian, on the other hand, said: "I just feel comfortable in tat clothes, Gene Vincent style. Loose, fun, sexy stuff." His favourite piece of clothing was a shiny blue suit jacket he bought off the rack at Trash and Vaudeville in St Marks Place.

The Pharoahs broke up in 1979, then reformed to cut two tracks on the Marty Thau '2X5' compilation, a production that gave too much emphasis to their ephemeral side and made them sound stilted. Brian began to concentrate on The Top Cats, which mutated into The Tom Cats and finally The Stray Cats. Brother Gary now fronts a new wave band called The Strain. The others have dropped out of sight.

ON THE BOX

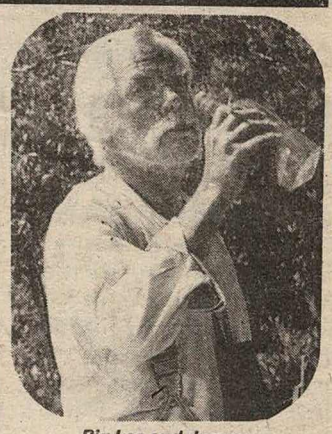
This week on telly by MONTY SMITH

Thursday January 8
Some sort of summation of Somerset Maugham in **A Victim Of Human Bondage (BBC2):** Was he over-rated or under-sexed? We think this programme should tell us, even if it has been put together by friends and relatives. The *Guardian's* Frank Keating meets Fred Davis in **Maestro (BBC2),** one of a short series of genuine superstar sports profiles; dear old Fred was probably second best at snooker only to brother Joe. And Brother Joe (Stalin) features in **The Little World Of Don Camillo (BBC2),** with Brian Blessed and Mario Adorf as the pugilistic priest and mayor of Giovanni Guareschi's short stories.

Friday January 9
Cancel all engagements! Not only is Prince Charles the guest on **Afternoon Plus (ITV)** but Sir Huw Wheldon's **Royal Heritage (BBC1)** is being repeated!! Honestly, does anyone really give a toss? **To Serve Them All My Days (BBC1)** just about sums it up, I guess. Stick with **Soap (some ITV)** and **Fothergill (BBC2),** a *Playhouse* film starring Robert Hardy as a real-life Basil Fawlty.
Film: **The Big Heat** (Directed by Fritz Lang 1953). A typically tight and tough Fritz Lang thriller with Glenn Ford excelling himself as the put-upon ex-cop and Lee Marvin attempting to rearrange Gloria Grahame's features with steaming mugs of coffee. Not very nice. **(BBC1)**

Saturday January 10
QPR manager Terry Venables and *Straw Dogs* author Gordon Williams discuss their *Hazell* creation in **Arena (BBC2);** neither would have chosen Nicholas Ball (the ex-Mr Pamela Stephenson)) for the part of the East End private eye — Williams plumps for Micael Elphick, Venables for John Binden. John Martyn guests on **OGWT (BBC2).**
Film: **One and One** (Ingrid Thulin, Erland Josephson and Sven Nykvist 1978). Using the tips they picked up from Ingmar Bergman, the three Swedish luminaries plod their way through one of those typically breezy Scandinavian capers: a successful, middle-aged artist emerges from a long-standing relationship feeling she has no purpose in life. Know just how you feel, dear. **(BBC2)**

Sunday January 11
Hal Linden, better known as *Barney Miller,* is the esteemed guest of **The Muppets (ITV).** Vanessa Redgrave, Jane Alexander and Marisa Berenson star in **Playing For Time (ITV),** an adaptation by Arthur Miller of Fania Fenelon's memories of Auschwitz.



Big Lee and dummy

Monday January 12
Cannabis is again a vital ingredient in **Shelley (ITV),** as Hywel Bennett is raided by Peter Vaughan. And hardly more serious cops feature in **The Sweeney (ITV);** this re-run has Norman Eshley as a chickenshit recuit buggering up Carter and Regan's best-laid plans.
Film: **The Private Life Of Sherlock Holmes** (Billy Wilder 1970). Robert Stephens and Colin Blakely as Holmes and Watson in a highly unlikely but hugely enjoyable, offbeat study of the Victorian sleuth. One of Wilder's most measured movies. **(BBC 2).**

Tuesday January 13
Alan Bleasdale's *The Muscle Market* is **Play For Today (BBC 1),** and after his stunning and very funny *The Black Stuff* last year, this has got to be worth a look. Unfortunately, it's up against **Wolcott (ITV),** the trials and tribulations of a black cop in North London; George Harris plays Winston Churchill Wolcott, the creation of American scriptwriters Barry Wasserman and Patrick Carroll. Episode Two is on Wednesday, Three and Four on Thursday.

Wednesday January 14
D.H. Lawrence's **Sons And Lovers (BBC 2)** has been dramatised in seven parts by Trevor Griffiths, himself a nifty little writer; Eileen Atkins and Tom Bell head the cast, in parts played by Wendy Hiller and Trevor Howard in the 1960 film and by Terry Jones and Michael Palin in the 1972 sketch.

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UNIDENTICAL FLYING TT THOMPSON TWINS

By PAUL DU NOYER

Thompson Twins L to R: Tom Bailey, Pete Dodd, John Roog, Chris Bell, Chris Bell's twin, John Roog's twin, Pete Dodd's twin, Tom Bailey's twin. Pic: David Corio-Twin

Improvise your mind with The Thompson Twins — all four of them...

WHEN THE Teardrop Explodes roll into Liverpool to climax their national tour with a home town gig, the whole place buzzes with anticipation. First, though, there's the irritating formality of a support band to be gone through — especially bothersome when it's an unknown quantity like the act lined up for tonight's warm-up chores.

"Like *worratheelike*, these Thompson Twins, like?" somebody peers out from under his fringe to demand of somebody else. "Dunno," shrugs the somebody else. "Identical, I s'pose."

The truth, however, is somewhat different. The Thompson Twins are four in number; they're not related; they aren't even very much alike.

The name comes from a couple of characters in *Tin Tin*. "We picked the name to be as untypical of a four-piece band as we could. What happens is people think we're Richard and Linda Thompson."

In fact they're not at all like Richard and Linda Thompson either. In fact The Thompson Twins at their best are one hell of a good band.

So, if not alike, what *are* they like? The answer, of course, is 'very likeable'. Shrouded in darkness and then illuminated by eerie green footlights that throw vast shadows across the back drop, The Thompson Twins take the stage in an assault of jagged, discordant noises, a startling sound which slowly pulls itself into recognisable shape. The music they play thereafter can lurch from dark, dramatic pieces of improvisation to, at the far extreme, light, melodic and surprisingly accessible songs.

Throughout it all, the four Thompsons present a picture of elegant dishevelment, ploughing forward with an appearance of casual assurance which completely belies the fact that, usually, they don't know what the hell is going to happen next. Just as you're adjusting your perceptions to the visual and aural landscape before you, everything's thrown up in the air again by the sudden emergence of an indeterminate number of 'guests', weighing in with anything from congas to toy saxophone to piece-of-metal-with-pointed stick. Rhythms — often dub-inspired — feature as a crucial element in the sound, and mix with echoey, mysterious vocals to produce an overall effect which, at its best, can be uniquely atmospheric.

A case history: The Thompson Twins are Tom Bailey (bass and vocals), Pete Dodd (rhythm guitar and vocals), John Roog (lead guitar) and Chris Bell (drums). Meeting up at school in their native Chesterfield, Tom, Pete and John formed the original Twins and gradually emerged around the fringes of the Sheffield scene (Human League, Cabaret Voltaire et al) of about two years back. Then came the time-honoured move down south "to get noticed", where they found drummer Chris, then at a London art college.

Thus constituted, the TTs took step one towards world domination with a debut single, 'Squares And Triangles', done on a shoestring for their own Dirty Discs. This was followed by a one-off 45, 'She's In Love With Mystery,' on the indie Latent label, a London outlet run by journalists Phil Shaw and Steve Taylor. A deal with Hansa, for at least a further single, has just been signed.

ALL OF which looks like quite satisfactory progress on paper — both the records so far released have made their mark in the independent charts — except it's fair to say the true Thompsons' sound has yet to be heard on vinyl. Pete Dodd agrees.

"So far, it's true, we don't feel we've achieved our full potential . . . "

I'd go further and opine that they've been quite badly mis-represented. 'Squares And Triangles' and 'Mystery' both come across as essentially lightweight and disposable, conveying nothing of the richness and power the band are capable of live.

"Yeah," Pete concludes. "It's something we're acutely aware of, much as we're grateful to Latent, and it's something we're trying desperately to remedy." The group point out that both songs are old ones, pre-dating the firm identity and sense of direction they've now established.

We should get a clearer indication of the Twins' capabilities with the release of the next single, 'Perfect Game', at the end of the month. It's produced by Mike Howlett (of Teardrop Explodes / Orchestral Manoeuvres fame) who they'd also like to use for the debut album — itself tentatively planned for March.

February, meanwhile, sees the band embark on a 30-date tour under the 'No Nukes' banner. The gigs might well unveil the addition of two permanent new members, as well — that's Joe Leeway on percussion and Jane Shorter on sax and keyboards.

Improvisation is likely to remain a keynote of the Thompsons' performance. Even the occasional disaster, such as a power failure, is put to use. As John says: "It seems to break down the idea in the audience's head that you're trying to be the infallible musician who's going to put on a spotless performance, no flaws, no untoward events. It creates a warm feeling."

And Tom: "It's a part of that whole improvised outlook to everything — that you can use your mistakes, use your hassles. Don't just accept them, actually exploit them!"

In keeping with this theory, they asked me before the Liverpool show if I'd join them on stage, playing whatever came to hand. However, reasoning that the line between 'improvisation' and deterioration is a very fine one, I reluctantly declined. Besides, hell, I *knew* people out there in that crowd . . .

THE LONE GROOVER — BENYON

I WENT INTO THIS COSMETICS SHOP AN' ASKED THEM TO DRAW MARKINGS ON MY FACE — IT'S TH' LATEST ETHNIC THING.....
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY DID BUT THEY MUST HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB BECAUSE EVERYONE KEEPS STARIN' AT ME RILLY HARD — IT'S GREAT—
HMM.... THEY SURE DID A NEAT JOB — IN FACT I'VE NEVER SEEN A BETTER....
...MAP OF TH' LONDON UNDERGROUND...
ANTLIKE!
IS THAT RYDE PACK OR GREEN LANES?!

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(WHILE STOCKS LAST).

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A&M RECORDS

1: MARK E. VERSUS WINSTON

"IT'S TYPICAL of the 'rock' sort of thing today. I *want* to be didactic, I *want* to be opinionated, I don't think because we're having a fucking hard time everybody should stop having opinions and start getting into good-time stuff. I think people in hard times need brain stimulation more than *any* time."

Right! Mark Smith's commenting on the way certain music journalists have turned against The Fall's staunchly anti-escapist stance because the vagaries of fashion at present dictate that "having a good time till the bomb drops" or "looking good when the bomb drops", or suchlike nonsense, is the *de rigeur* pose to pursue.

History will always be re-written, of course, but that's no reason to accept the revised version, especially when it's as self-evidently lame and defeatist as the current one. Besides, an unpopular opinion in populist times is always good for a laugh, as the Firesign Theatre pointed out. Which reminds me — few people see the humour in The Fall, just the face-value sneer that hides the smile ...

Fall "fans", in general, aren't clones of the band, as is much the case with many bands, especially in an age when bands brag about "selling a whole concept" to a record company instead of just a record. There are no Fall clones simply because there's nothing really *there* to clone, nothing to pin down.

"Bands smaller than us," admits Smith, the latter-day Man Without Qualities, "have got these sort of clone people walking about." His attitude is so scathingly set *against* those kind of practices, there's little chance of such pathetic idolatries building up.

"We've started getting people who'll stand by us. I've talked to loads of people who come to see us who just don't like any other groups, which is great. I mean, they haven't got FALL written over their chests and everything, but they say, 'Oh, I like you, and I like a bit of reggae and a bit of ...' "

There's a very large number — some people are surprised at just *how* large a number — of disaffected music-loving folk who just *aren't bothered* about "looking good" or buying the latest clothes, no matter what the economic climate's like and what the music barons and their hand-maiden press dictate, and who find little to connect with in more transparent musical/stylistic practices. For many of them, The Fall are still the only honest group around, the only ones who don't condescend, who don't try and manipulate them.

But I digress. What of dancing until the bomb drops?

"Fuckin' crap. Bullshit. I mean, the whole scene's gone back seven years, 'cos some people are out of work. We've always been poor — hasn't made any difference to us. Y'know, it's what really shits me up. I mean, like, Teardrop Explodes — escapist fuckin' rubbish! I'm not knockin' it, I never have; I've always loved that type of stuff. But, y'know, when you start gettin' knocked for trying' to fuckin' *say* somethin'..."

What's surprising about Mark E. Smith, on first meeting him, is how little he conforms to the "difficult bastard" image beloved of Fall-commentators. He's actually a regular kind of bloke, as friendly and forthcoming as any I've met in this line of work; it's just that his refusal to tolerate bullshit, both onstage and off, and his general determination to drag at least a certain proportion of his audience up by their lapels, shaking them and shouting "Wake UP!" until they do has got him numbered as the stroppiest sod this side of Johnny Rotten. A&R men are apparently frightened of him, and disinclined to sign bands who cite The Fall among their influences / interests. Funny, eh?

Mind you, it's not exactly an image he's fought shy of. Quite the opposite: the self-proclaimed "white crap that talks back" obviously takes a certain delight in getting up peoples' noses. And why not? Some noses I know are badly in need of irritants — a good sneeze would clear away a lot of crap.

"We're having a bit of a difficult time," says Smith, " 'cos people are coming along and sort of *liking* us, as opposed to the last two years, where it's just been getting up everybody's backs. Gotta change your tune . . ."

But given their reputation — a sort of professional thorn in the flesh — do The Fall expect, or even *want*, to reach a wider number of people?

"... which we can do; I mean, we have sort of broken that myth down, we are doing it, eventually. We're getting more and more of your average rock audience — it's getting quite heavy in a way — and we've got to start on them as well."

"Voyeurs!" sums up guitarist Marc Riley with sardonic succinctness.

"But I mean, you've got to watch it," continues Smith, "or you're just preaching to the converted all the time. There's no way I'm gonna go on now and just fuckin' *barrack* 'em, 'cos you're getting 500 people in a hall and they've all come to see you. It's no use just saying 'Fuck it' like we used to be able to."

But are there any people who *don't* deserve a barracking?

"It's hard to say," says Riley. "They're just part of the situation, aren't they? Like at Doncaster (one of the places where the live 'Totale's Turns' was recorded), it was a really horrible place, with sort of really bad vibes goin' about. Dead *cold.* That's why it's hard to define a good audience, unless you can actually say you're getting good feedback off them — 'cos even if they go loopy, they might not be into it; they might just be goin' out for a drink.

So would a "good" audience be mainly pro-Fall or anti-Fall?

"That's what I'm saying — it's hard to define, y'know? It's probably just people with an open mind. I think we *are* getting a lot more voyeurs just coming to see if Mark'll start on somebody, or if we'll get hit, or something ..."

"I'm a firm believer in the 80% subsidising the 20%," says Smith.

2: TOTALE WEIRD

I'M NOT going to try and persuade you that The Fall are the salvation of rock'n'roll — whatever that implies — or that Mark E. Smith's the most charismatic figurehead since the *Marie Celeste,* because they aren't and he isn't, and that kind of stuff doesn't matter a damn anyway.

In fact, until this year, the only pieces of Fall music I could honestly confess to *liking* were 'It's The New Thing' and 'Repetition', wryly acidic comments on the programming of desire performed with appealing shabbiness.

The first record that stung me into realising how "good" The Fall could be was 'Fiery Jack', a spiky but steamlined slice of '80s urban rockabilly which knocks spots off the retrogressive, style-orientated offerings of such as The Polecats. Since then, I've come to regard 'Totale's Turns' as the best — and most honest — live album of 1980, its superficially shoddy exterior hiding a heart of hardened self-respect which more than makes up for any shortcomings in the area of recording.

Part of the appeal of 'Fiery Jack', for me, was in its personal connotations: the song seemed, from where I stood, to deal with a character whose capacity to "think think think" was destroyed by his predilection to "drink drink drink", itself the result of ... something more personal. This may be an incorrect interpretation of the song as Smith intended it, but it makes more sense on a personal level, which is what counts here and now.

Smith's readily aware of the benefits of interpretation as opposed to mere assimilation, active listener participation (which doesn't mean jumping on stage and bouncing around to satisfy your ego) being one of The Fall's most oft-avowed intentions. Hence the somewhat puzzling introduction of semi-parodic missives and comments from the fictional 'Roman Totale XVIII' and his 'son', Joe, on the covers and accompanying handouts of recent Fall product. Deliberately vague and half-formed, they allow plenty of room for projection and interpretation, besides serving as a kind of self-criticism. As Smith admits, "I've also got to have things to stimulate me, to keep me going — even if they're in-jokes. It's the only way — you can only be your own judge."

Hence also Smith's increasing tendencies towards storytelling in his songs, addressing things obliquely or allegorically rather than directly. Take, for instance, 'The North Will Rise Again' from the new 'Grotesque' album, a song widely misconstrued as just another provincialist rant:

"I mean, everybody knows about the split between the north and the south in England, but 'The North Will Rise Again' isn't a political statement, it's a *story,* like a science-fiction story. The way I wrote it was from a few dreams I had after playing the north a lot — it's about what would happen if there was a revolution. It's purely fantasy, science-fiction stuff.

"But of course, everybody's gonna go 'Huh! The North! Here we go again — Smith talking about flat caps', and all that cliched rubbish. Actually, the message in it is that if the north *did* rise again, they would fuck it up. Not that they ever rose before. . . It's just like a sort of document of a revolution that could happen — like somebody writing a book about what would have happened if the Nazis had invaded Britain. It's the same concept as that. Not a lot of people have gleaned that, probably because it's the last track on the LP.

"I was very disappointed with the reviews we got — well, they don't really affect me, but — 'The North Will Rise Again' was, like, the fuckin' centrepiece of the album, for me. I really worked on that. And I thought people would take it a bit more. . ."

He leaves the sentence hanging, but the implication is clear: a bit more carefully, a bit less on face-value. *Try a little harder!*

3: HOME OF THE BRAVE. . .

A MAJOR theme running through several of the tracks on the new album is the concept of "grotesque peasants". Those not familiar with the concept have probably led very sheltered lives; for them:

"The 'grotesque peasants' thing was like an offshoot of 'New Puritan'. It's trying to say what England is like now — I think I was getting pretty obsessed with the English class system, especially after going to America. You're fed all this shit about murder in America, and the high sort of vicious capitalism they have there, but the workers there are better off than our workers are. I mean, England is just so full of hypocrisy — go round liberating the slaves, and all this, and then treat the northern people, the working population, like fucking scum, y'know — they always have. And recruiting armies and sending them over to other countries to terrorise the people — I mean, they're real *brutes!*

"Like, we went to New York — and I know it's violent, and that Lennon was shot dead there, and that — but it was fucking safer than Manchester or anywhere in Yorkshire's ever been at half eleven! When the pubs shut in Manchester and Yorkshire, it's fuckin' deadly."

I know.

"But in New York, you know where the violence is, and you can keep away from it. There's lights on every street corner, and you can walk down well-lit streets. If you go down back alleys, you know what you're letting yourself in for. . . but in England, there's this undercurrent of violence — it's like that in London as well, y'know."

So I've noticed. More so, in fact.

"And England has always operated on that basis. The Irish thing's the same — sending English people over there to terrorise the Irish, who're a dead easy-going sort of people. . ."

But surely, a lot of people condemn themselves to being 'grotesque peasants', especially in the north? (cf: *All Creatures Great And Small* and lovable Lowry stereotypes).

"Yeah, right. I used to have this thing about 'Northern White Crap', which is much the same thing. 'Cos I mean, I'm northern, we're all northern as well, and I don't like the way northern people degrade themselves; 'cos it's not even a poverty factor, y'know? I've been places where there's worse poverty — the Mexican people aren't like that, and they live on rice, y'know? And it's the same with the bands — northern people are so media-hurt that they think something's got to come from somewhere else to be good. It's a northern thing. Like The Beatles; you go to Liverpool, and everybody clams up when you mention The Beatles, 'cos they fuckin' hate 'em. They're fuckin' *jealous!*"

4: LAND OF THE FREE

THE FALL, as mentioned above, have recently been to America, where they played to mixed receptions. This struck me as rather surprising. The Fall seem so English, in a way — almost an institution — it's difficult to imagine Americans getting to grips with them.

"I thought it was great" opines Smith. "I mean, I think The Fall stand more chance over there — we were getting really good support. And we nearly sell as much in America as we do over here, and we get loads of mail.

"Y'see, the thing about America is that their scene's so crappy that they do see something pretty different. It filters through the crap."

"I've got trust in Americans," he continues. "Everybody sort of goes 'Ehhh?' when you say that, but I think that apart from New York, they're fuckin' great. They're classless, really. They treat their music really differently from the way we do — it's like the pictures there, like going to see a movie. They eat, and everything, while you're on; they're sat there, and you're goin' wild, y'know?"

"We played a gig with Iggy Pop while we were there," says Riley. "It was like a big Talk Of The Town, or something — all these couples sat round tables, drinking wine, and just a couple of people stood there at the front, looking at you. Really weird! Like a cabaret, really. . ."

"Iggy was on after us," adds Smith, "And he was doing the whole stuff, the cut bit and everything, and there were all these check shirts, coked out of their heads, with tans. . . at the back of the club was this big window, you could see a bit of the beach, with palm trees on it. . .

"I think all the groups come back from there and. . .," he diverges, leaving the sentence hanging again. "But they go over there and act like fuckin' 'eavy metal groups."

"They all treat it like a hard slog, as well," says Riley. "They don't even enjoy what they're doing. They go over there, and they say, 'Oh, well, I'm not bothered about breaking America', y'know, but when they get back and people say to them 'What d'you think of it?', they say, 'Oh, it's hard work, y'know. Didn't really like it. Be back over there again soon'."

"Well, it's like anything in America," says Smith. "It's just that we were lucky, because we had some pretty hard financial troubles while we were over there. Everything sort of fell to bits, so we had to sort of get to the roots of the LA scene; which we did, and it was good. This is, like, a year ago. We've been to Holland since, and that was horrible — the greatest argument against Crass I've ever seen. Crass are really big over there."

"Anarchy signs everywhere you go," says Riley.

"Smashin' glasses and that," says Smith, "and fuckin' coppers sweepin' it up after them!"

"They're tolerated, as well," — Riley again — "I mean, they don't mind all these punks riding around on bikes, with their anarchy signs, just messin' about — they'll tolerate it all the time, just like the hippies. They treat 'em both the same, put 'em all in these little sort of communes. . ."

Where they can 'take care' of them?

"Yeah, they got it all sussed out," agrees Smith. "This is one non-advantage about Britain. The British Government is like a huge swindle you don't get anywhere else in the world, the only government that actually swindles people out of money and doesn't actually give them anything back for it. Whereas all the other governments of the world sort of do give people support, and so forth." *(Oh yeah, of course, like Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, USSR, Switzerland, South Africa, Ghana etc. — Ed).*

5: AN UNPOPULAR OPINION IN POPULIST TIMES

"I DUNNO. . . when I heard it, I was dead shocked. The first thing I thought was it *would* have happened in Liverpool. . . but. . . I don't know, I sometimes think things like 'Maybe he had it coming to him', y'know. Like, life is like that — if you sort of lead a whole generation of people on to do something like leave home, freak out, and become revolutionaries, and then you turn round and say, 'Well, I've just met this woman, Yoko, who's fuckin' great' — she is, like, I think that — but she broke his balls. It's not a sexist thing to say, y'know. . . *(Ha ha — Ed)* but it's like everything came back on him. He released an album about how great it was to be straight, and there's hundreds of people — well, there must be millions of people whose lives he affected.

"I mean, he even got through to me — I mean, like 'Working Class Hero'. . . I don't think of myself as one, but I think that from his situation, it's so fuckin' good that he actually gleaned that from one song. I think that's one of the few good things he did, y'know, where he actually says, like, 'I was *screwed* for what I did'. That's why he became an American citizen, I think.

"But you can't do that. Life is very cruel like that: you can't lead people on for ten years, and just turn round and say 'I'm a father now'."

"It's like Lydon, in a way," interjects Riley.

"Yeah, it's tough for them, but it's like I was saying about the things we slag off in the music biz: You've got to take responsibilities. We actually pay for things like. . . we did a track years ago called 'Music Scene', and that's one of the reasons we're on an independent, 'cos A&R men don't come and see us. They over-react. It's the same with the *NME,* in a way — anybody from the *NME,* we're not gonna rip their guts out, but people do get the impression that The Fall will just, like, attack, verbally or physically, anybody from the establishment.

"We just do it through lyrics. So people steer clear of you; but it's a thing you have to pay, you can't go round saying. . . which is where Lennon and Rotten fell down, y'know. They were fuckin' geniuses, the pair of 'em, but I mean. . ."

"They lay their soul on the line, but they take all that responsibility," Riley sums up.

Are you listening, Adam?

DID YOU KNOW?

That Britain has the worst government in the entire world — bar none

DID YOU KNOW?

That Manchester is a much more dangerous place to live than New York

DID YOU KNOW?

That everyone in Liverpool hates The Beatles and is jealous of them

DID YOU KNOW?

That America is a classless society

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF MARK SMITH

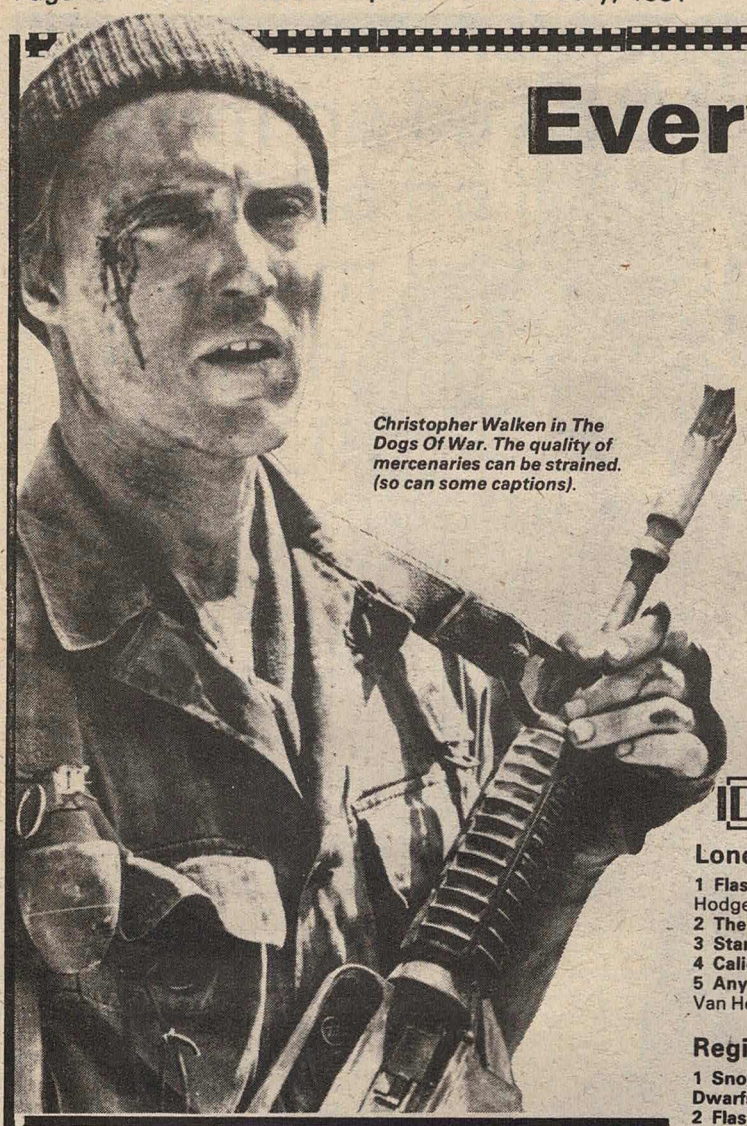
Mark Smith

Pix: Pennie Smith

DID YOU KNOW?

That Andy Gill discovered all these pearls of wisdom — and more — while talking to The Fall

Every dog must have its pay



Christopher Walken in The Dogs Of War. The quality of mercenaries can be strained. (so can some captions).

SILVER SCREEN

BOX OFFICE

London

1 **Flash Gordon** (Directed by Mike Hodges)
2 **The Dogs Of War** (John Irvin)
3 **Stardust Memories** (Woody Allen)
4 **Caligula** (Tinto Brass)
5 **Any Which Way You Can** (Buddy Van Horn)

Regions

1 **Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs** (Walt Disney)
2 **Flash Gordon** (Mike Hodges)
3 **Friday The 13th** (Sean S Cunningham)
4 **Quadrophenia** (Franc Roddam) / **Scum** (Alan Clarke)
5 **The Big Brawl** (Robert Clouse)
(Screen International)

The Dogs Of War

Directed by John Irvin
Starring Christopher Walken and Tom Berenger *(United Artists)*

OR RATHER cry 'Profit!' and let slip another film of a Freddie Forsyth best-seller, this time a depressing tale of white mercenaries trying to topple the Amin-like dictator of some imaginary West African state.

Much too much has been lost in the transfer from page to screen. Based on his own first-hand experience as a journalist, Forsyth's novel provided some fascinating insights into the mercenary mind and the unscrupulous methods used by the middle men, black market arms merchants and vested interests who employ men like Vietnam veteran Shannon (Christopher Walken).

John Irvin's film is painstaking if plodding as it follows the elaborate preparations for Shannon & Co's raid, but falls flat on its long face when confronted with character. This is both disappointing and surprising, since Irvin recently directed the superior television dramatisation of John Le Carre's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.

The film's Shannon is totally notional. Although Walken's emaciated pallour brings it a certain haunted presence, the role's psychology is at best rudimentary and at worst scarcely credible. Ex-wife rejects Shannon's renewed attentions, hence his return to the mercenary fold with grim, truly existential determination, etc, etc — this is all so much motivation by numbers.

But at least Shannon is characterised, however inadequately, in some dubious depth, which is more than can be said for the film's other main parts. The toffish Endean (Hugh Millais), the voice and instrument of the multi-national corporation financing the coup, and the persistent, left-wingish film-maker North (Colin Blakely) are only two of all too many pulp thriller stereotypes. Forsyth himself was never this given to formula.

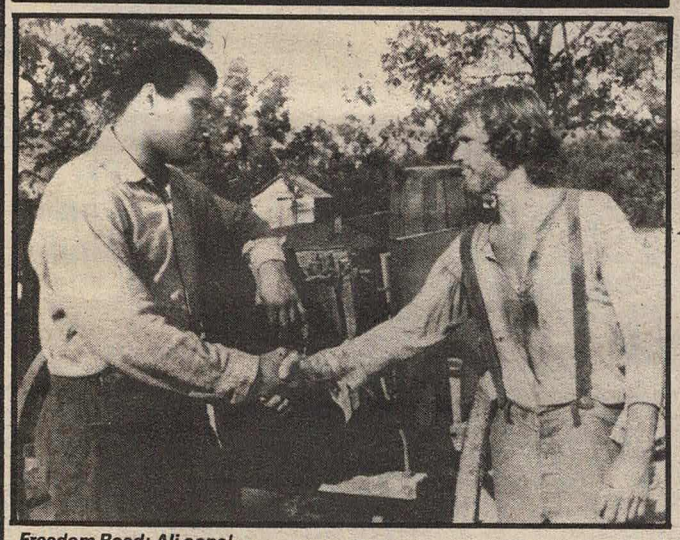
All of which is a pity. In its favour and despite the occasional, obligatory lapse into melodrama, *The Dogs Of War* avoids the *Boys Own* infantility of *The Wild Geese* and offal of that ilk. It neither glamourises nor romanticises Shannon and his partners in paramilitary crime. They're merely (fashionably?) presented as doing what they do for better or worse? you can like or leave 'em. There are no last-minute rescues or macho heroics here — the film's studious, quasi-documentary approach precludes as much — and action addicts paying to see endless fire fights and close encounters of the killing kind will be sorely disappointed.

But this show of apparent, aloof indifference doesn't entirely ring true. Considerable mileage is made of Shannon's deliberately putting an enormous spoke in his sponsors' wheel towards operation's end. Perhaps we're supposed to applaud this metamorphosis from amoral to moral man of action, but I found it pretty tendentious, no more than a throwaway "so there is some honour amongst these thieves after all" sop to conventional wisdoms.

As any conscientious *Grauniad* reader knows, the world is already over a barrel of oil what with the capitalistic West and communist East constantly interfering in Third World affairs for their own economic ends. *The Dogs Of War's* response to the situation — and it does have pretensions to having a 'serious' response — is unclear, self-contradictory even.

First the film idly shrugs a shoulder at the inevitability of it all, then it frantically tries to vindicate itself by making Shannon into an acceptable anti-hero. Either way it won't wash, any more than will its insinuation that in every emergent nation there's a brutal and genocidal petty dictatorship just waiting to get out. To be honest, I'd rather re-read Forsyth or Anthony Sampson's *The Arms Bazaar*, a damning expose of the weapons trade in general.

Angus MacKinnon



Freedom Road: Ali ooops!

Freedom Road

Directed by Jan Kadar
Starring Muhammad Ali and Kris Kristofferson *(Enterprise)*.

I WAS hoping that *Freedom Road* might be the successor to Richard Fleischer's much-maligned *Mandingo*, all steamy Southern decay and degradation — but what I got was a soap-opera-cum-parable of former slaves and po' white trash uniting to fight the nasty Ku Klux Klan. Like *Roots*, except it doesn't go that deep.

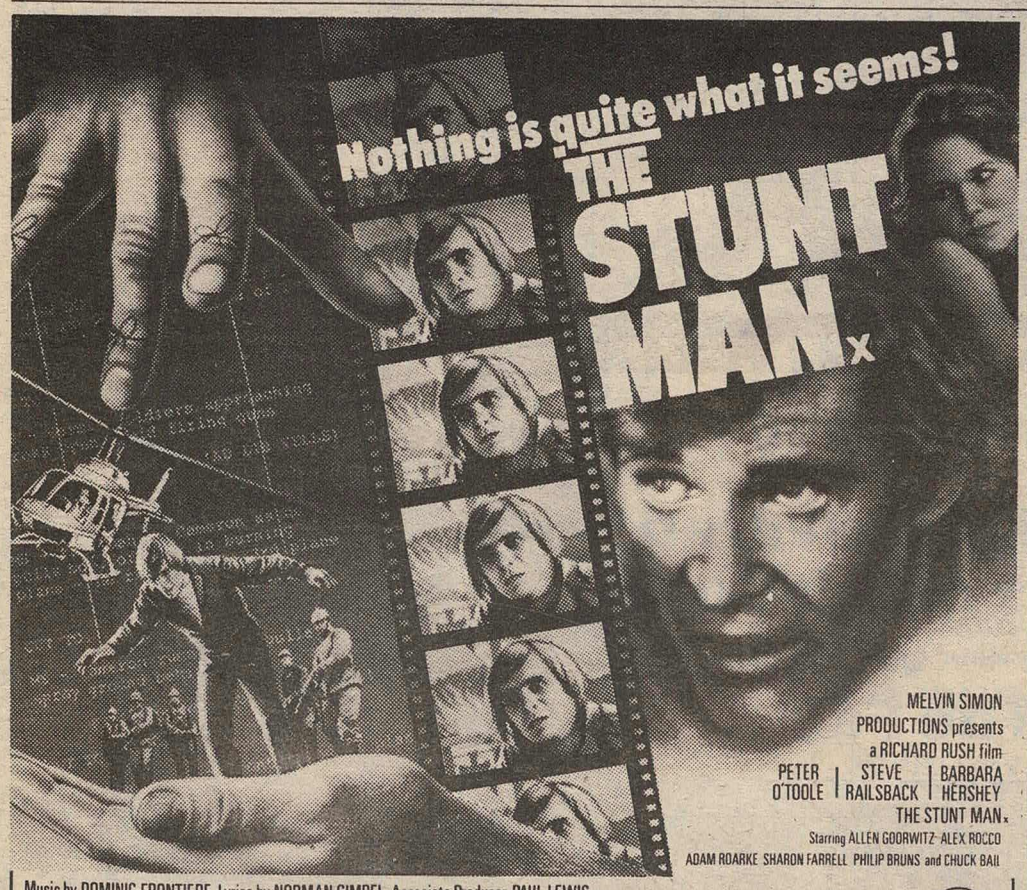
The plot tells how Gideon Jackson (Ali), an ex-slave, is demobbed following the American Civil War and, taking Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to heart, forms a co-operative of blacks and poor whites who buy their own land to free themselves from the hegemony of corrupt plantation-owners (a typically American view of freedom-through-material-acquisition) and find themselves opposed by determined hordes of Klansmen. Sort of a liberal defeatist fairy-tale extolling the virtues of real-estate investment.

The pace throughout is shades of slow, and some of the editing *surprising* (to say the least), shortcomings probably due to *Freedom Road's* origin as a TV series and subsequent condensation to "acceptable" film length. This explains the oddly abrupt, apparently overnight growth of beard which suddenly appears on Ali's face two-thirds of the way through the film, the entire middle section dealing with Gideon's rise to Washington politics having been ruthlessly excised in the transition from TV to cinema.

As an actor, Ali's passable, but typecast. His problem is that he can't subsume his personality enough to adopt another role; he's always 'Ali' first and foremost, never convincing in any other guise. When asked, at the press reception following the screening, how he liked acting, he gave the staple response that he'd been "doing it for 20 years now". This may be the case. The trouble is, it's always been the same role, and it's too late to stop now.

For a film starring the world's most famous boxer, *Freedom Road* has far too little fisticuffs and far too much preaching; but then, this only reflects Ali's change of occupation over the past few years. The mouth may be mightier than the fist, but if this is all it's got to say, the preacher's seeds may ever fall on stony ground.

Andy Gill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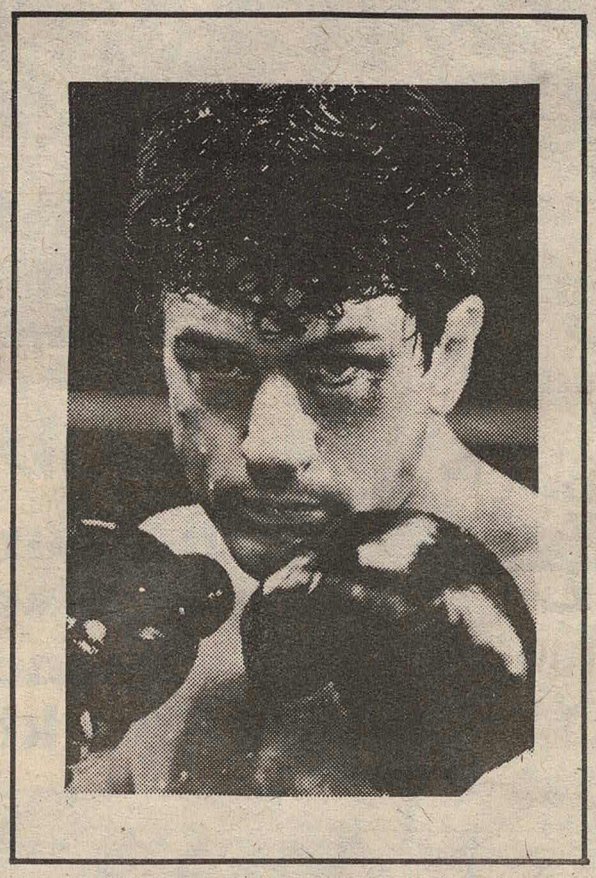

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KENT, HENRI PADOVANI, CHRIS MUSTO

1972

1973

THE ALMOST LEGENDARY NICK KENT STORY

The modest (if a mite incestuous) tale of the celebrated NME writer who is now on the threshold of becoming a bona fide rock star with his group The Subterraneans

VERBALS · CHRIS SALEWICZ **VISUALS · PENNIE SMITH**

IN TRUTH, this was not the easiest assignment I'd undertaken.

My task: to chronicle the elusive saga of Nicholas Benedict Kent, the enigmatic rock writer who is about to embark on a new phase as singer, songwriter and guitarist with The Subterraneans, a four-piece combo whose 'My Flamingo' single has just been issued on Jake Riviera's Demon Records.

Lest any of you carp that there is some Masonic-like nepotism about such an article appearing in the pages of *NME*, the organ in which the florid, cut-and-thrust Kentoid prose has appeared since 1972, my riposte to your quibbles must be clear: Nick Kent *is*, as he is sometimes unfortunately only too well aware, something of a legend in the annals of '70s rock'n'roll. Plus, 'My Flamingo' is a work of considerable social and artistic merit that throws startling light on the dilemma of a human condition.

Besides, you can be pretty certain that *Melody Maker* is not going to be putting Mr Kent on its cover just yet.

NICK KENT is an amoral, roguish scoundrel with one of the most remarkable unorthodox physiques ever bestowed upon a human being: it permits him something akin to a sleight of body by which he almost literally vanishes from awkward situations!

The high romanticist that is Nick Kent indulges in a constant revision and re-writing of his own history that has resulted in his 28 years appearing to have been constructed of semi-mythological factoids. These fit together in as convoluted a fashion as the syntactically complex sentences that are one of his literary specialities.

Why all this embroidery is really necessary, though, is anyone's guess. Those stories capable of substantiation are good enough on their own.

There are eight million Nick Kent stories in the Naked City.

Here are some of them.

Nick Kent has one of the most agile, detailed memories anyone is ever likely to encounter — he has never been known to use a notebook in his career as a journalist. Nor has he been known to use a typewriter — Nick Kent delivers all his editorial copy handwritten in a cramped scrawl: it is invariably late.

Nick Kent has left milk bottles filled with his own urine in most of the abodes in London in which he has stayed. Perhaps there is a connection with this and the *two* pairs of leather trousers he wears at the same time of late.

There are plenty of stories about Nick Kent and his trousers.

Here is one of them:

One day whilst the *NME* still was situated in the ghastly IPC Folly at Blackfriars, Kent — then during one of his more impoverished periods garbed in a pair of semi-open crotch corduroys — was observed by another *NME* writer as he bought a tube ticket at Blackfriars station during the evening rush hour. As he pocketed his change, Nick dropped his ticket. In bending over to retrieve it the full set of Kent genitalia slipped through the gaping hole in his crotch, causing quite a stir among the female commuters in the queue.

One wonders if his rude bits were as grimy as are often his neck and face. There are those who insist on the theory that Nick Kent carries aerosol cans of spray-on dirt to better that Bohemian effect.

Chrissie Hynde, with whom Nick had for a number of years a serious romance, remembers that the first time she ever met Nick she had to mend his trousers for him. She also knows he has a tendency to, shall we say, exaggerate.

"He's such a transparent liar," she laughs affectionately. "He's the sort of kid who, if he stopped off on the way home from school to buy some sweets and was asked by his mother why he was late, would not only deny that he'd bought the sweets but would also invent a totally different route by which he'd claim to have come home."

Very few people actually know where Nick Kent spent his childhood. Sometimes he claims to have been reared in Hampstead, though this is probably pure affectation. In the '60s definite sightings of the teenage Kent were made at schools in Sussex. There is also a Cardiff connection, however: only Nick speaks of having seen early Rolling Stones concerts in the Welsh capital. There is some sort of Morecambe connection, too.

THE FOLLOWING are definite facts: at the beginning of the '70s Nick Kent was studying English at London University's Bedford College — he claims he went there after being kicked out of Oxford for dealing speed.

One day he turned up at the Portobello Road offices of underground paper *Frendz*, then being edited by John May. After delivering a couple of album reviews, quickly he started writing lengthy rock'n'roll features for the paper, producing articles on, among others, Captain Beefheart, Roxy Music, Hawkwind, and his beloved Iggy Pop, in whose eventual artistic renaissance Nick played a large part.

John May remembers that Kent's knowledge of rock music was awesome:

"He had a phenomenal knowledge and enthusiasm for rock'n'roll. He was very freshfaced in those days. Even so, he used to create a very odd reaction in people when he went to gigs, partly because of the way he looked — he was just starting with his eye-shadow and nail varnish — and partly because as soon as the music started the whole of his upper trunk would sway forwards and down and up again like a pendulum. It was impossible for anyone to stand behind him. I remember he was hanging out at the Royal Gardens Hotel in Kensington a lot in those days — Iggy was staying there."

Quickly, Kent and photographer Pennie Smith, who worked as the *Frendz* designer, moved to *NME*, then situated in London's Long Acre. During the hard times he was to encounter in the mid-'70s, Nick frequently stayed at Pennie's place.

"I think," she suggests, "you ought to mention his eating habits. The loaf of bread is an interesting one. He likes to sit there while he's working or reading with a fresh loaf of bread in front of him, and he'll scoop out and eat all the inside of the loaf and leave its empty crust lying there — Nick doesn't like crust."

During the early days of his *NME* career, Nick lived mainly on tomato soup and strawberry yoghurt. Half-empty yoghurt cartons with a green covering of mould would often be found in the Long Acre review room — a place he'd annoyingly commandeer as his personal study. Sometimes lying next to the carton would be a half-eaten lump of cheese, replete with Kent tooth-marks — you could tell it was Nick's piece of cheese, because he'd had half of one of his front teeth knocked out when someone hit him in Malcolm McLaren's Sex shop as he harangued Chrissie Hynde during the tempestuous end of their love affair.

"I always thought Nick was secretly very pleased with losing that tooth," says Chrissie. "Because it happened right at the peak of his obsession with Keith Richard — and he was always very impressed with Keith's dreadful dental state. The guy who hit him was working in the shop at the time. Later, though, he joined the Hare Krishna bunch, and I see him with them walking up and down Oxford Street sometimes."

Nick Kent had a fondness for pancakes. He once decided to make some in my kitchen. At the crucial moment his then girl-friend, Hermine Demoriane, insisted on tossing the first one he ever made. Of course, it spattered on the floor. Nick was nonplussed.

"It's alright," he murmured, running his fingers through his hair in what for many years was an archetypal Kent gesture and bending down to pick it up. "I'll eat this one."

WHATEVER, KENT is a highly literate man who loves James Joyce, T. S. Eliot and John Donne. He's a fan of Frank Sinatra's voice and loved the sound of Roger McGuinn's twelve string Rickenbacker in the early Byrds, an influence that can be detected in the guitar-work on 'My Flamingo'.

Rejecting the impulse to attain a spiritual empathy with my subject by spending an afternoon traipsing round London's record company press offices gathering rent money in the form of review copies, early one December evening I made my way over to the Kent abode in the Holborn area of the capital.

Nick had told me he lived in a mansion flat, though tenement block would be closer to the truth. I ascended several flights of graffiti-sprayed stone steps and found that he was at home — I hadn't been counting on it too much.

As befits a man who has named his group after the title of a Jack Kerouac novel, Nick's front room seemed rather Bohemian. Cigarette butts were strewn about the bare floor-boards, sleeveless LPs were piled against each other in a corner, there was a distinct absence of anywhere to sit.

Nick offered to make me a cup of coffee. As he stood at the sink in the adjacent kitchenette and rinsed the hepatitis cultures out of a pair of cups, I wandered through into the bathroom. There was something touching about the pile of torn-up pages of the *NME* that served as toilet-paper.

Back in his front room Nick was pouring about a quarter of a pound of sugar straight from the bag into the coffee in my cup. He stirred it with a fork, handed it to me, and pulled up a pile of newspapers on which he sat himself down. I perched on the edge of a large metal trunk. Then Nick told me he had to go out shortly, but that we could finish the interview the following day. I tried not to consider whether this was actually likely to happen.

Nick Kent often avoids eye contact — he is actually rather shy. With his eyes totally shut, Nick leaned back on his newspaper pile and, with vague, comprehensive flourishes of a Marlboro, proceeded with a lengthy refutation of what he considered was the bad reputation with which he'd been lumbered.

He was regarded as a junkie, he said, when in fact it was several years since he'd renounced heroin.

"I take a very moral stance against heroin in something close to the Biblical understanding of the word. I just think that it's something that is completely *evil*, and no benefit whatsoever can be gained from having anything to do with it.

"I do regret having fostered at times the idea that dabbling in junk is cool. The use of hard drugs is getting very widespread at the moment, and it's just really horrible to watch. Hearing of yet another former acquaintance

who's dead is just so . . . so depressing. It's pointless talking about these things beyond saying, Don't mess around with it, because basically you are dealing with something that is far stronger than you are.

"In terms of what I do lyrically with The Subterraneans I have no great desire to address subjects like that, because it is so easy to glamorise it."

It seems worth pointing out to him that his involvement with The Rolling Stones is considered by many to have been the cause of his fall from grace, and that for a while he was seen as yet another Stones' casualty.

Nick, however, insists that the Stones had nothing to do with his demise.

"I was very taken in by their glamour, though," he admits. "At one time I was supposed to be writing a book that was to accompany the album, 'It's Only Rock'n'Roll', which initially was going to have been a double album — one album of studio work plus another live record. This was written around the European tour in 1973. And I saw very early on just . . . I recall one incident in particular. It was after the last gig, which was in West Berlin. There was a party afterwards at this grotesquely Gothic hotel in which, incidentally, just prior to the party starting there had been a Nazi reunion. As we entered all these guys with eye patches and their overcoats slung over Nazi uniforms were leaving . . . so when I talk about decadence, I'm talking about *decadence*. A real sense of Evil.

"Anyway, the party got underway. There were loads of posers there — the usual thing. It got a bit wild. But then someone brought in a load of strippers and drag artists from the real hard-core part of West Berlin. This degenerated very quickly into real *Cocksucker Blues* stuff. Real voyeuristic ugliness. The main attraction was two naked women involved in a lesbian situation on a very large bearskin rug.

"There were about 300 people there, and Keith Richard and Mick Jagger were seated on these big thrones. They had obviously been experimenting with advanced chemistry, to put it midly. And they just sat there with this utterly brutal, cold look. Anyway, one of Billy Preston's band, who were really unpleasant little guys, threw this huge candelabra — filled with burning candles — onto this rug where the two women were still involved in their, uh, performance.

"The rug immediately caught fire, and suddenly these naked bodies were enshrined with flames. One's immediate reaction was to put the fire out, or try and get them out of there. But Jagger and Richard sat there, and just watched it. And everyone else was watching them — no-one was moving a fucking muscle, because Jagger and Richard were saying, Oh, I'm cool. And I just thought, Oh, this is not on at all. And that is my most vivid recollection of The Rolling Stones.

"As individuals, on a one-to-one basis, I've got quite a lot of respect for them. I think that Jagger, for example, is quite an honorable guy. I really like Charlie Watts — he's a great bloke. Keith Richard is also basically a good guy. I personally have never had any grief from them.

"But I was forewarned by that incident. They're so attractive; you want to be part of their club, their clique. But I realized very early on that there are but five Rolling Stones. And so many people want to be part of that . . . that Boy's Club. And those people are the casualties. People like Gram Parsons. It's a very dodgy issue, really.

"Certainly some of what I wrote at the time was very irresponsible. It was very wink-wink, nudge-nudge about Keith's hard drug habits."

1974

NICK WAS also particularly concerned to correct a story that once appeared in *ZigZag* that stated that Keith Richard had once puked up over a fur-coat belonging to the writer, an incident that had provided supposedly such a thrill for the writer that he'd left the holy vomit on the garment to this very day.

"There's hardly the slightest accuracy in that story. The truth is that *I* puked up over Keith Richard's doormat — in fact, come to think of it, it was Ronnie Wood's doormat. Keith was down there working on that first Ron Wood solo album. And I certainly took very great care to immediately wipe up said puke."

It is time, however, for Nick to keep his appointment in town. We walk up to the West End together, and as I disappear into a tube station, Nick assures me that the following night he will come over to my place for the evening and we'll get over and done with this formal interview.

The next evening I make sure that I'm in early. I wait for Nick. Naturally, he doesn't show up. The next morning he's also arranged with Pennie Smith that he will go out to her place for a photo session.

He doesn't show up there, either.

A FEW DAYS later I track Kent down at the *NME*. No apology is given for not having turned up at my home. He's going over to the Scala Cinema, though, he tells me, in order to see the manager and fix up a January Subterraneans date. We can do the interview in the cafe at the Scala, he suggests. We wander towards the cinema, accompanied by Subterraneans drummer Chris Musto (the other group members are original Police guitarist Henry Padovani and on bass — Nick enthusiastically announces — he has just recruited none other than Glen Matlock).

Tucked away in a corner of the Scala cafe, Nick sips coffee and retraces some of the territory which he'd covered at his place.

"Ever since Chris and I started working together — which is just over a year ago now — I've felt incredible personal pressure to eradicate the bad reputation that I've found myself lumbered with, some of which, mind you, in a past context is fairly justified. I have been guilty of gross acts of irresponsibility. I have been very untogether, and a somewhat undependable figure.

"Basically, I had to prove that I was not some washed-up-junkie-Keith-Richard-lookalike. In this business, if one is a 'character', one is filed under one's caricature, which basically bears very scant resemblance to the actual person themselves. I can imagine mine being, 'Very undependable, untogether, stick insect, anorexia chic' . . . All that very 'witty' stuff. Very witty, boys. Problems with certain chemicals . . ."

But, I point out, trusting he'll detect the reference to his not having turned up at my home, isn't all that a bit self-created?

Nick sidesteps. "Possibly . . . but . . . ah, I'll give you a good one: Nick Logan in 1974 actually said that the *NME* would finance me to go to Jonathan King and be *made* A Rock Star. This is *not* a well-known story. We got together in a pub — Ian MacDonald who was then assistant editor was also there. The idea was that they would put me on a sort of course to 'Shape A Rock Star', with the real stipulation being that I would still write for the paper.

"I mean, things snowballed very quickly after I first joined the paper — as a freelancer, I might add. I've never been a staff member. But there were all the photographs of me, and the whole personality journalist schtick. And Logan quite earnestly said that I would be sent to Jonathan King — a lot of money was involved. *NME* would pay for me to go into the studio and record. They presumably saw a very viable thing in putting me in this position with this absolute clause that I still write regularly from my newly acquired pop star status.

CONTINUES OVER

KENT STORY

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"I just found the whole idea pretty repellant, however.

"But, anyway, that was right at the height of things in 1974, which was certainly my best ever year. There were a good six months of very good writing — the Syd Barrett piece that always gets mentioned was really just one of many.

"But I was working incredibly hard — far harder than I realised. And I was having various extra-curricular problems — *not* drug problems, I hasten to add.

"I was living with an American girl who is now fairly well known as a singer in her own right *(What are you trying to pull here, Nick?)* and good luck to her. But that was falling apart, and there was a lot of friction because we were both fairly volatile personalities. That fell apart in the summer of 1974 and it did take its toll — more than I realised at the time.

"Everything was happening so quickly — particularly on the *NME* with that weekly turnover. Certainly musicians don't realise that if you're working for a weekly music paper the pressure is much more intense than it is, say, working in the studio. I don't feel my writing deteriorated, but I was definitely in bad shape by the end of 1974."

SENT OUT to Los Angeles in the Spring of '75 to cover Jethro Tull, Kent turned in the predictable diatribe against the pretentious excesses of Ian Anderson, and then stayed out in LA for the full duration of his six-week ticket. He divided his time between diligent research for an article he was intending to write on reclusive Beach Boy Brian Wilson and rigorous attempts to drill into the drug-clouded brain of old comrade Iggy Pop the need to clean up.

Iggy's excessive use of stimulants, however, appeared to rub off on the hedonistically inclined Kent. There are hilarious tales of the writer paying for narcotics for the penniless Pop by permitting the dealers to pick up whatever luxury items they desired from the Sunset Boulevard Hyatt hotel shop. These goods were then charged to Nick's hotel room, the tab for which was picked up ultimately by Ian Anderson.

Nick Kent returned to London with a California tan that belied his physical state.

"In actual fact," he says, "I'd gone to California for a rest, but of course I couldn't have chosen a worse place in which to try and do that."

Immediately he got back to the *NME* Nick became involved in a *contretemps* with the editorial staff of the paper over his consistently late delivery of copy. He was temporarily kicked off the paper.

He began work on the Brian Wilson piece, which he now conceived of as a three-part story.

"A real slump set in with that Wilson piece. I remember starting it and it was going really well. I felt really inspired, really up. On the last part of it, though, I spent literally hours between sentences just staring at the paper. Something had snapped, and I just couldn't write anymore. And it *freaked* me. I just couldn't write.

"That, though, was when I started messing around with The Sex Pistols, though it was really a pretty minor involvement."

A large part of Nick's being taken up into the McLaren entourage was down to his former girlfriend.

"I remember," Chrissie Hynde recalls, "I was sitting in this cafe in Soho with Malcolm, who was fresh from managing The New York Dolls, and we were talking about how to form the ideal rock band. What we need, said Malcolm, is someone who's young, intelligent, looks great, and is totally dedicated to rock'n'roll. And we both looked at each other at exactly the same moment. *Nick Kent!*

"I went and got on the phone to him straightaway."

Nick, along with Chrissie, became part of the pool of musicians that the Svengali like McLaren would draw upon and slot perceptively into various permutations of usually brief line-ups. The first ever show by a group called The Subterraneans took place in Cardiff in 1976 and consisted of The Damned plus Nick plus his then girlfriend Hermine Demoriane, who last year issued her own version of 'Veiled Women', the song on the B-side of 'My Flamingo'.

Nick Kent is no Johnny come lately to the art of song-writing.

"I learnt the guitar to write songs, *not* to be a guitarist. I wasn't the sort of person who'd play the guitar along to records. Being a musician was never an end in itself.

"When The Beatles came along and I was about 13, I remember sitting down at the piano and working out some silly song. It was always there. But only in the last two years have I felt that the songs were anything more than imitations of better influences.

"For a while there were a lot of songs that had very obvious Keith Richard block chords. But I always had this feeling that one day it would come. It was the same with writing, in fact that feeling that even though I didn't have it at the time, I knew I would have it. It was just blind faith, really.

"Within the last year, everything just fell into sync.

"But for a long time I was very worried about my vocals — I didn't think my voice was that strong, having never properly checked it out in a recording studio. But I remember the first time I had to sing, which was during some sessions a couple of years ago that I was doing with John Perry and Mike Kellie of The Only Ones and Tony James of Gen X. This was for Speedball, which was a label being put together with backing from Island Records by Eddie And The Hotrods' manager Ed Hollis.

"Anyway, when it came to be time to do my vocals, I just backed off. I didn't want to hear my voice. But when I eventually did do it, it didn't sound that great, but certainly I'd heard a lot worse.

"Previously I'd always seen myself as the sort of guy who is like, say, a Mick Jones to a Strummer. I'd always viewed myself as the kind of guy who stands to the right of stage and paces things while someone else is right in the limelight and really does all the projecting.

"But seeing Elvis Costello had quite an impact on me. It certainly wasn't a case of, Well, if he can do it, than I can; far from it! I just found him very inspiring, and was impressed by the way he fitted no particular category. He was not good-looking. . .

"Eventually, though, I did feel that the songs I was writing very definitely had something to say. They weren't just hand-me-downs — diluted versions of other people's ideas. They had a certain distinctive sound.

"Previously, whatever unit I was working with never felt comfortable. It was very hit-and-miss. I would just walk out. I've got this great reputation for being irresponsible, but it's more like going out for a packet of cigarettes and coming back two years later. If something's not right, then it's wrong — it's just a gut reaction.

"But it was from these humble origins that The Subterraneans were born. We went through a lot of personnel difficulties. Perhaps because he felt he might have thrown a definite spanner in the works by removing our then bass player, James Eller, to tour with Clive Langer, Jake Riviera forwarded us something in the region of £1,000 to rehearse and try and find a new bass-player. We brought in for a while Jimmy Hughes, late of The Banned and Cowboys International."

NICK REQUESTS a recess for a further cup of coffee. The always impecunious Kent also asks if I will purchase for him a speciality of the Scala caff with which he is acquainted — a piece of Passion Cake. The Nick Kent Gourmet Guide never fails to amaze.

Through a mouthful of gateau, Nick describes the stage debut of The Subterraneans.

This took place last summer at the Edinburgh Festival. Performing in the Playhouse, Nick and his group played bottom of the bill to Elvis Costello, who was also supported by The Rumour.

"So there were already two other groups' sets of equipment onstage.

"Jake comes onstage and gives a really dramatic introduction, *'Ladeezangennelmen! From London: The Subterraneans!'*

"And I hadn't even plugged my guitar in. More to the point, I couldn't find the lead for it. I'm amazed it wasn't a bigger disaster than it was. It was not an auspicious debut, but it could have been an absolute shambles."

Drummer Chris chips in: "We actually got applauded, which was surprising. We weren't heckled."

Nick: "Of course, as soon as Jake had announced us, we were supposed to go straight into our first number, but I was having further problems with my guitar lead. Although I'd now found it, I hadn't wrapped it round my guitar-strap to prevent it from falling out. And so, of course, the the thing fell out."

Chris: "I'd already started the intro to a number when Nick is suddenly wandering about the stage looking for his lead."

This is a none too unexpected tale: as Nick Kent is not exactly the most manually dexterous of fellows, I'd wondered if he would be caused difficulties by the mere mechanics of playing.

Nick: "Chris, you've seen me play. What would you say?"

Chris (spluttering with laughter): "Don't make me laugh!"

Nick: "You just watch it. . .One of the things Jake was saying was, If you're a professional and you're singing and playing guitar at the same time, you *don't* look at the fret-board! And I must admit I did find myself tossing the odd glance the way of my guitar neck.

"But we were so cramped for space, there was no way I could move around. I couldn't throw any shapes," he moans.

"But," he continues, "the thing is, that once it was denoted that old Nick Kent and his group were making a record, then just from a businessman's point of view there were bound to be a certain number of people about who'd be interested to hear if I was going to make a fool of myself.

"Basically that group, though, which consisted of myself, Chris, Jimmy Hughes, and guitarist Mike King, actually fell apart in the making of 'My Flamingo', which was quite a long process. We must have done something in the region of 30 mixes.

"Paul Riley, who produced the single at Nick Lowe's Shepherds Bush studio, took me to one side with Jake and said, listen, do you want to make a record that people will hear

CONTINUES PAGE 37

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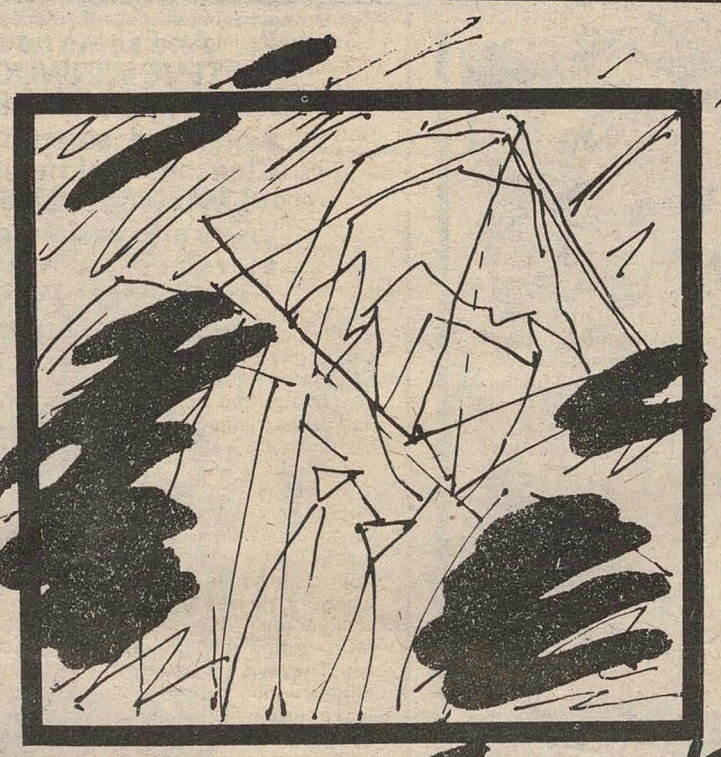


Pic: London Features International

Singles reviewed this week by ADRIAN THRILLS

The Shakin' Pyramids

Pic: Harry Papadopolous

Left: Spandau Ballet's Anthony Hadley. Right: David Bowie. Above: A Shaking Pyramid. Below: Positive Noise's Ross Midleton.

SHORT FRINGE SINGLE OF THE WEEK.

THE SHAKIN' PYRAMIDS: Reeferbilly Boogie (Cuba Libre) Cool!! It's a mighty long way down a dusty trail from Memphis, Tennessee to the suburbs of Glasgow, but you'd be forgiven for thinking that the two were on one anothers doorsteps after a shot of The Shakin' Pyramids.

The Pyramids — Jim Creighton, Davie Duncan and Ken McLellan — are the busking, bopping Elvis, Scotty And Bill of the burgeoning British rockabilly roll-call and they play with all the passion and panache of their American cousins The Stray Cats.

But where Uncle Sam's runaway boys plump for the bounce of their beefed-up monstersound, The Shakin' Pyramids have pared everything down to the slapping, skelatal basics. They don't even possess a drummer, relying instead on chiming acoustic guitars, yelps, adlibs and some rough and ready harmonising to push the beat along.

"Reeferbilly Boogie' celebrates the joys of illicit reefer madness while getting in some cheeky incidental digs at the Woodstock Generation. Cuba Libre records, meanwhile, already responsible for an excellent Cuban Heels single last year, are coming out as another real pop label to be reckoned with.

Like I said, cool.

LONG FRINGE SINGLE OF THE WEEK.

SPANDAU BALLET: The Freeze (Reformation) When they signed Spandau Ballet in the autumn, Chrysalis made one or two ridiculous claims about their new employees being the most vital force for the '80s, the future of modern dance as we know it. Your know the sort of thing.

There is still some way to go before they are able to justify that sort of billing, but the band themselves have quickly and quietly dispelled most of our remaining preconceptions, prejudices and blind spots in the best way possible — with the sheer dynamism and verve of their music.

The promise in their debut single was surprisingly crisp and catchy, but even that pales into lightweight insignificance alongside 'The Freeze' in which they plunge headlong and with much more conviction into swaggering white funk.

The tune is once again hooked around a Gary Kemp riff, but this time the synthesiser spirals are noticeable only by their almost total absence, and the gothic twists of the discomix are embellished by the rest of the band with some elastic bass and drum snippets that range from salsa to dub.

Vocalist Antony Hadley might lack emotional and tonal range, but most of his shortcomings are barely apparent in the lush diversity of jazz-funk drummer Richard Burgess's starched production.

In the long run, all the extravagent claims made on behalf of Spandau Ballet will probably do them more harm than good.

Records like this one, to cut a long review short, do only the opposite.

INSTITUTION OF THE WEEK.

DAVID BOWIE: Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps) (RCA) From the alleged upstarts-most-likely-to onto the supposed godfather of the new dandyism, although Spandau Ballet probably have a lot less in common with the Thin White Duke than popular myth would have us believe.

But that's not Bowie's problem. Decades might come and go, but some things never ch-ch-ch-change: another year and that louse Dave is still taking his fans for ride after ride by culling single after single from album after album. This edited version of the title track is already the third single to be pulled off 'Scary Monsters' and no doubt there'll be a few more yet.

Not that it's a bad record. A cryptic tale of nauseating nurds and things that go bump in the night, it allows Bowie to adopt his best Anthony Newley gums of Brixton brogue for immortal lines such as: *"Oi love that li'll girl and oi'll love 'er till the day she dies."*

It is also one of the only true rockers that Bowie has recorded in the last five years, rumbling along in tow of some good chunky percussion and a syndrum not a million miles away from 'Unknown Pleasures'. When you consider the guitarists he's been using of late — Alomar, Fripp etc — and their tendancies to be rather prone to histrionic excesses, the only really remarkable thing about this single is that the onetime mainman hasn't recorded more like it in recent years.

A shame it had to be one from the album, but still worth 10p to hear on any pub jukebox.

NEXT MONTH'S SINGLE OF THE WEEK.

POSITIVE NOISE: Give Me Passion/Ghosts (Statik). A sneak preview! The first Positive Noise single isn't in the racks yet, but my private posers tape copy is so breathtakingly good and the majority of the rest of this week's singles so dull and hungover that there should be little shame in giving it star billing here.

Like The Shakin' Pyramids, Positive Noise come from Glasgow, but there the resemblence begins and ends, certainly as far as musical style and content go.

Positive Noise's Ross Middleton is one of the new pop's great eclectics. The group's influences are unashamed and wide ranging, from the echoes of Magazine in Middleton's blatant Devoto vocal introduction to 'Give Me Passion' to a hint of The Distractions in the tinsel of the song's fairground organ. There are also some more subtle shades of Joy Division in 'Ghosts', where the bassist instead of the lead guitarist actually plays the songs melody line.

Mixed and produced by up-and-coming teen whizzkid at the console Nick Launy, this is an exhillarating record. Get up and use it.

LAST MONTH'S SINGLE OF THE WEEK.

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT: I Drowned (Dancing Sideways) Brought to you by the same set-up who produced the very worthwhile Self Control EP last summer, this single has been knocking around for a month or two without anything spectacular happening to it. Obviously an overlooked victim of the Christmas rush.

Strangers In The Night are a south London quintet and this ditty is an innocuous enough pop-reggaeish number on first hearing. With repeated plays, however, the band's persuasive groove becomes more and more apparent and 'I Drowned' and its superior flip 'New York In The Dark' draw you into a web of rolling basslines, smoothe sax and even a mellow mouth harp.

THE DOGMA CATS: Experts (Leisure Sounds)

ERSATZ: Smile In Shadow (Leisure Sounds). The first brace of singles from a new Royston-based independent who have in the past confined their efforts to tape ventures of the *Garageland* variety.

Their experience in the cassette field must have stood them in good stead for they make the transition in style. After a couple of formulative tape tryouts, both these bands have produced interesting and well-rounded debuts, particularly The Dogma Cats, whose punchy 'Experts' could have snuck unnoticed onto the first — and best — XTC album, no trouble.

Ersatz plump for a less quirky mode. Their guitarist is a little less psychotic, preferring the radar blip approach to frenetic fret scratching. But their 'Smile In Shadow' is still much less clearly focussed than their Leisure Sounds labelmates. Perhaps one more stab at developing some promising ideas in the tape marketplace might have been advisable before trying to cement them on vinyl.

IDOL DEATH: New Lesson/Sticky Death (Yellow And Black) Despite one of those by now cliched hissing synthesiser beginnings sounding exactly like John Foxx's theme music for Danny Baker's Sunday morning LWT documentary *20th Century Box*, this electronic pop pastiche develops promisingly into a decent single, a gnawing percussive dub collage that makes a few wierd noises here and there, but manages to keep on the path of a consistant rhythm throughout.

THE IMMORTAL INVISIBLES: Classical Music (Sauna Brothers) Despite this week's best band name, Cwmbran's Immortal Invisibles have produced a single with little of the wit or imagination that must have gone into selecting their group moniker.

'Classical Muisc' is a messy stream-of-consciousness dig at the sort of folk who get their kicks from classical music concerts, and by that I don't mean good gigs: *"Here is a quiet bit/The audience coughs/A polite way of telling them to get on with it/They are not so demonstrative as pop fans/In the interval they will not wreck the toilets."*

Such narrowmindedness! I mean, what's a gig without a trashed turdpot. These old orchestral buffs just don't fit in with the new tribalism one jot. Then again, haven't that lot always been just a bunch of prissy posers? They were pioneering elitism when Steve Strange was still in his nappies.

Incidently, the flip of the Invisibles' single is 'No Zip', ultimately my feelings about the band themselves.

ORANGE DISASTER: Something's Got To Give (Neuter) From the most inauspicious of starts — they were once a run of the mill punk outfit trading as, would you believe, Varicose Veins — Hitchin's Orange Disaster have transformed themselves into something much more likely to make you stand up and listen.

This is what The Monochrome Set might have sounded like if they had mellowed and honed their original insistant pop attack instead of coming over all self-conscious just because they went to an art school. Orange Disaster expound their wackily concerned beatnik stance over a svelte synth riff and some wailing sax: *"The world is no that bad/It could be twice as frightening/Let's talk about Howard Hughes/That's much more exciting!"* Well, at least they're being positive. At over six minutes long, 'Something's Got To Give' tends to drag on a bit, but

■ *Continues over*

SINGLES

■ *From previous page*

there's nothing here that some judicious editing couldn't correct.

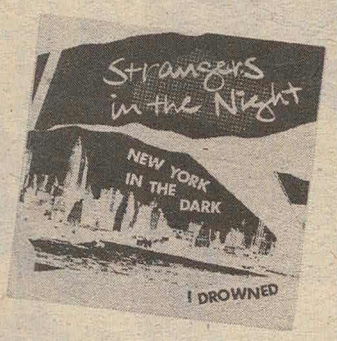
THE FIRST STEPS: Anywhere Else But Here (English Rose)
DAVID HARRIS: Harry's EP (English Rose) Exactly a year on from their first single 'The Beat Is Back', Suffolk popsters The First Steps have their second stab at trying to make powerpop sound convincing all over again, as if it ever was, by regurgitating a Clashriff so archaic that even Mick 'n' Joe put it into cold storage themselves well before they began work on 'Sandanista!'. In fact, it was last seen disappearing over the edge of 'Drug Stabbing Time' on the second album and hasn't re-appeared since. The First Steps have obviously got some talent; not everyone can produce prickly pop powerchords and still sound as if they're actually enjoying themselves these days. All they need now to go with their undoubted spirit is some imagination.

Their labelmate David Harris, according to the blurb which comes with his EP, is a man "with his own very definite views" on everything from the army to "mutant disciples" whatever they may be. But people who choose to accompany their songs with nothing more than a miserly acoustic guitar always end up sounding like wimps wallowing in self-pity, no matter how hard-baked their lyrics might be.

WAMM: Wanna Make Ya (Cargo) It was only a matter of time before Rochdale's near-legendary Cargo Studios got their record outlet together and this, if the label is to be believed, is actually their seventh release. Wamm, or Seven Year Itch as they used to be called, typify the Cargo sound, being harsh and metallic yet never unmelodic. But chanteuse Rita Rowe, with her unfortunate Maddy Prior wailing-voice affliction, combines with a singularly duff song to see to it that "Wanna Make Ya' winds up well short of Cargo's finest moment, the Gang Of Four's 'Damaged Goods' EP.

PZAZZ: Studio Shoes (Magenta)
L.A.X.: All My Love (Epic) Hardly the first two great disco singles of 1981 on anyone's dance floor. British band Pzazz come over like an anaemic Average White Band minus all the strident swing while their Yankee cousins L.A.X. possess the feel but come up with a sound at least three, sorry, make that four, years out of date. The lyrics raise a chortle, however, as they fall over themselves in a mad dash for social relevance and contemporaneity: *"The world is changing fast/You're trying hard to be a liberated lady with your destiny/So at the risk of being a male chauvinist/Is there a chance for love not to miss?"*

Answers on a postcard, please, to Rock Against Sexism.



"... And some have greatness thrust upon them."
STEVE WINWOOD was born great and had fame thrust upon him at an early age. After ten years as a certified 'superstar', forever jamming with Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, old uncle Jim Capaldi and all, Winwood retreated to his country estate six years ago and barely a bleep has been heard from him since. Till last week.
MAX BELL, who was born mad, had money thrust upon him to go and check it out.

GROWING UP IN PUBLIC

FIFTEEN OR SO years before Birmingham's sons toiled after the young soul rebels, there was a local rhythm and blues band called The Spencer Davis Group.

Although there is little evidence to suggest that this lot were particularly rebellious (Spencer was a university lecturer) they did have a prodigal talent and mouthpiece in the shape of a 16-year-old kid who was the talk of the Midlands — Little Stevie Winwood.

By the time most people were leaving school and stumbling into employment (they still had jobs in the '60s), the precocious Winwood found his face and voice plastered over the media. There followed an association with Chris Blackwell, label boss of a fledgling Island Records, and an early exposure to ska and reggae. SDG's first two number one hits were written by the West Indian pop singer Jackie Edwards, they were in the charts for 17 weeks.

Winwood became a featured star and expanded the sound. He was feted by the dancing aficionadoes of Motown and mod.

Steve Winwood was a face.

Two psychedelically tinted years later, Winwood was a group leader. The Traffic hybrid balanced English whimsy, electric folk, a lot of publicised love-hate and some experimental jazz-blues. They endured so long they became an institution of sorts — one that made it a habit to change personnel in America or just split up when the fancy took them (in the '70s group splits were considered very interesting). Traffic regenerated into supergroups and spin-offs, solo artists and casualties.

In 1974 Steve Winwood was young enough to remember the wild times when Traffic could talk about getting it together in their Berkshire cottage, could tell the reporter from *Rolling Stone* that "Super is natural!!", could run to a budget called the cornflake fund (no prizes for guessing where that went. It wasn't cornflakes). Anyway Steve was rich enough to retire. He still lived in England.

About the time that Johnny Rotten was telling us that the old idea of rock and roll stars was laughable, the musicians of Winwood's generation felt threatened and aggrieved. Traffic lyricist and drummer Jim Capaldi sniffed the change and wrote 'Time Is Running Out' which was an oblique reference to something or other to do with punk and transience.

Along with football, rock and roll is noted as an entertainment where the rules can be shucked every five minutes. So although Steve made his solo record, there were no more hits. He dabbled with some ethnic ideas. His fans said yes, very nice but . . .

He seemed to lack the confidence or the inclination to play the music business system anymore. He wouldn't tour, he wouldn't talk, he became a gentleman farmer in Gloucestershire (sheep) . . .

ANOTHER THREE YEARS of self-imposed seclusion, punctuated by the odd session, were ended last week when Island released 'Arc Of A Diver'. It landed without a context to frame it in, and has been panned and damned with faint praise. Only one reviewer, Angus MacKinnon, sifted through it properly.

By his own admission Steve Winwood is taking his chances against the laws of diminishing returns. He knows he can be accused of laziness, or a lack of motivation that indicates disinterest. He can ruminate on why he hasn't produced some local hopefuls, or made some singles, or plugged in at the village hall. So can we all. Perhaps he just spent three years doing relatively little except enjoy himself.

In the face of these points Winwood remains affable. He's polite, agreeable. His mixture of sweet reason and yes-I-suppose-you're-rightness is so damned honest that it can't be a gambit.

Here's Winwood, still only 32, just looking like the clean-shaven lad who charmed the socks off the girls in Brum. The man who could sing the Greater Manchester telephone directory and make it sound sweet. (I know this for a fact actually because I happened to have a copy of the aforesaid volume in my bag and on producing it Stevie immediately obliged with a rendition whose sweetness was never in dispute.)

What is he then? Enigma or idle sod?

He can claim to have been a contemporary of the British Beat Boom, to have bested Eric Clapton's Blind Faith, to have survived Jimi Hendrix, to have maintained integrity when other public figures became merely ridiculous assholes.

The day we talked, 'Arc Of A Diver' was hot off the presses. After several minutes of nervous prodding and hesitant circumspection an Islander burst into the room grasping a clutch of freshly minted albums. Winwood, who played every last gasp, engineered, produced, even made the tea, was enchanted, literally like a child with a new toy. His enjoyment was wonderful to behold. *Was* he excited?

"Course I am. It's all my own work, mate. I like it . . . lovely. Could be worse, it could be worse."

He almost kissed the matrix number off it. "Have you seen it? D'ya like the sleeve?"

And will anyone like the album?

"Aah, that's the real feedback, the brutal proof. The ultimate is sales. I can't sit around and watch the reaction, I'm going straight to the States to start the next one. Once you start, y'know, you can't stop."

In fact, Winwood is not just a kid with a new toy — he's the kid who found an old favourite. Accusations of his being out of touch are put into perspective. Rock writers forget that not everyone chooses to bury themselves in vinyl.

Besides, I like Winwood's record — almost as much as I'm disappointed in its failure to risk anything. People who have watched Winwood for longer than me admit that the man is confined by a great talent. So, in a way, does Steve.

"But I don't find it easy to form good writing relationships. After the last album Capaldi emigrated to Brazil and that was a problem. A

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Britain's Electrical Specialists

Left: Steve Winwood 1980. Pic: Fin Costello.

ABOVE: Celebrating! It's January '66 and The Spencer Davis Group have just toppled The Beatles from the No. 1 spot with 'Keep On Running'. L-R: Winwood, Peter York, Muff Winwood, Spencer Davis.
RIGHT: Amalgamating! The first 'supergroup' Blind Faith. L-R: Winwood, Rick Grech, Ginger Baker, Eric Clapton.
BELOW: Meditating! 'Getting it together in the country' the first of many Traffics. L-R: Dave Mason, Jim Capaldi, Chris Wood, Winwood.

The Arc-er: The Everyday Story Of Little Stevie Winwood, Country Gentleman and Rock&Roll Folk Hero

relationship went west."

Winwood was confined to sessions: "For Marianne Faithfull, Mike Oldfield, and I think I did George Harrison. Yes, I did. Odds and sods. A bit of a cop-out I feel, for meself. With a session there's no responsibility."

This responsibility is something that Winwood requires from himself, that and self-control. In search of the total solo album he immersed himself in his domestic Netherturldonic studio ("a 16-track with an old board. It allows me to make mistakes. You can't afford to do that in a commercial studio"). He doesn't dismiss accusations of indulgence and the lack of objectivity that such projects entail.

"Mmmm . . . It's not a particularly good thing because it takes too long. I'm almost certain that with the next one I'd use a producer again but it shouldn't matter what methods you use to achieve the final sound.

"I was under various pressures — for the ten millionth time, when's the album gonna be ready? — then I thought it would be easier to get someone to play a tambourine part. I'm glad I did it. I've got limitations as a musician, like I spent a week learning to re-play the drums, that's silly. It wouldn't be difficult to find a better drummer than me. You see in music anything *can* work — whether it will or not is what stops it getting boring."

WHATEVER THE boredom that drove Winwood to record again, the major outcome has been an enforced change of habit. He has never been a lyric writer ("I don't have the knowledge of literature to know what a great lyric is"). For 'Diver' Winwood worked with one Will Jennings, a young white spark best known for his words on The Crusaders' 'Street Life' hit and a spate of attractive but safe verses for Dobie Gray and B.B. King. Jennings is a neutral writer rather than an inspirational one.

"I didn't know much about Will, I'd never met him before — obviously. He can write straight from a melody, a very professional sort of artist."

The album's most immediately satisfying track, 'Night Train', is a good choice for a dance floor hit but it hasn't been used.

"I'm too close to know. I edited every track to single length just in case. That's my latest discovery. I can't wait to get at anything with a razor blade. I'd have to listen to them for months to gauge their commercialism. Then I'd get fed up with 'em."

Aside from Jennings' contributions (the two are already writing together again) there were two songs from George Fleming and one from Winwood's buddy Viv Stanshall.

"George had never written a song before in his life but he has the flair. He's writing a novel at the moment. I was surprised with his lyrics, although it's a personal touch. They either feel like rubbish or they feel comfortable.

"With Viv (Stanshall) he writes from scratch or from a melody."

Stanshall is Winwood's most potentially exciting collaborator, his title track the album's most elegant cut by far — one that ousted the singer into finding a suitable riposte to the writer's quirk-ridden imagery. Why don't the two of you do it properly?

"It's pinning the bugger down, he's doing so many things. The film and all that. We've discussed it often enough."

Although he's loath to elaborate, Winwood was partially responsible for helping the eccentric Englishman at a time when his drinking habit had reached danger level.

"I don't think I dried him out. If I encouraged him, well fantastic. I spoke to Viv on the phone recently and then someone said he was on this chat show and he was, err, fairly well watered. Everyone has their poison."

I wondered if Winwood took any interest in new pop, or the avenues of modern disco and funk which he has always been capable of using well? The production on 'Diver' is curiously subdued in that respect, perhaps the result of Winwood's difficulty in achieving a suitable bass/drums rhythm, one that enhances the contemporary boundaries.

"I go through stages of not wanting to hear anything, just phases. I like to be open . . . I did spend some time getting the feel of reactions to certain records but I listen from a musical point of view. I tend to think, probably incorrectly, that rock and roll is an audio medium. I try not to be swayed by fashions; at least I'm not able to judge the theatrical qualities of an act.

"What do I like now? Adam and the Ants reach me and . . . I'd have to look at a list to remember."

I put it to Winwood that he's been associated with a particularly English kind of music in the past, Traffic's rural authenticity being one reason for their enduring popularity in the USA. With Will Jennings he has worked at a remove from the areas he used to feel were second nature.

"Yes, except that styles have always gone back and forward, always been a mixture of African and European influence. Five, ten years ago I could have told you where a record was made. Not any more."

And so it tends to lose its focus?

"Music is always a reflection of what's happening. It's not a question of whether that's a good thing but whether it's been done well."

WINWOOD UTTERS this without a hint of dogmatism; everything he says is qualified and reasonable. To give him credit, at least he's in the fortunate position of having maintained a discreet silence when the paradox of punk and the rock business ethic came into collison.

"There was also a lot of overstatement in the '60s. And so there was with the early new wave — although a lot of that was satire pure and simple. See, that is a peculiarly British thing. It was about time there was some satire in rock and roll again; now it's become more serious again.

"I didn't feel threatened because ever since I've been in the music business there's been a different fashion . . . that's an unfair word, but it is fashion."

Or an inevitable change? A lot of people finding the familiar forms of rock music distasteful?

"Yeah, it's quite true rock and roll could become redundant at any time. In lots of ways it is meaningless but there'll always be a music that overrides fashion. R&R might be dead but enjoyment of a certain arrangement of sounds isn't going to go away."

What about the old indulgence, the rock star as a hero on a pedestal? That's something you've avoided.

"Ummm, oh right! I thought you were going to say that's one of the things I've been accused of (laughing). In the '60s it was still possible for a group to go from being a struggling act to having enormous wealth. Psychologically that doesn't do anyone any good."

Yet before you were 21 you'd had seven Top Ten hits.

"I dunno how, but I found it a much slower process. I had hits with Spencer Davis Group but it wasn't great stardom. I didn't have time to embrace it 'cos all the time I was on the bloody road in a coach.

"I don't miss that, whatever the glamour was. I do miss the immediate reaction. I had enough of the lifestyle, I avoided it. But then if you're dedicated you have to put up with it. Now I've got a need to play live again."

As you've broken with your past, you won't be pressured to relive it?

"That's true, but I find that I would like to take old songs and update them — it stops the rot setting in on your past. You can't just forget what you've done."

But you wouldn't work with any other members of Traffic, would you?

Winwood looks up in astonishment and laughs. "Oh! That's really put me on the spot. Uh, how can I say it? No, no, or not until I've written any new material. I haven't a clue."

He collapses giggling for a while then recovers composure. "I'm not keen on resurrecting old bands. You see the disasters. There's no way I'd go on the road with a band called Traffic . . . I very much doubt that."

What does Jim Capaldi think of your album?

"Well, what do I think of his? I'll work with him again I know."

Perhaps you still miss the group atmosphere.

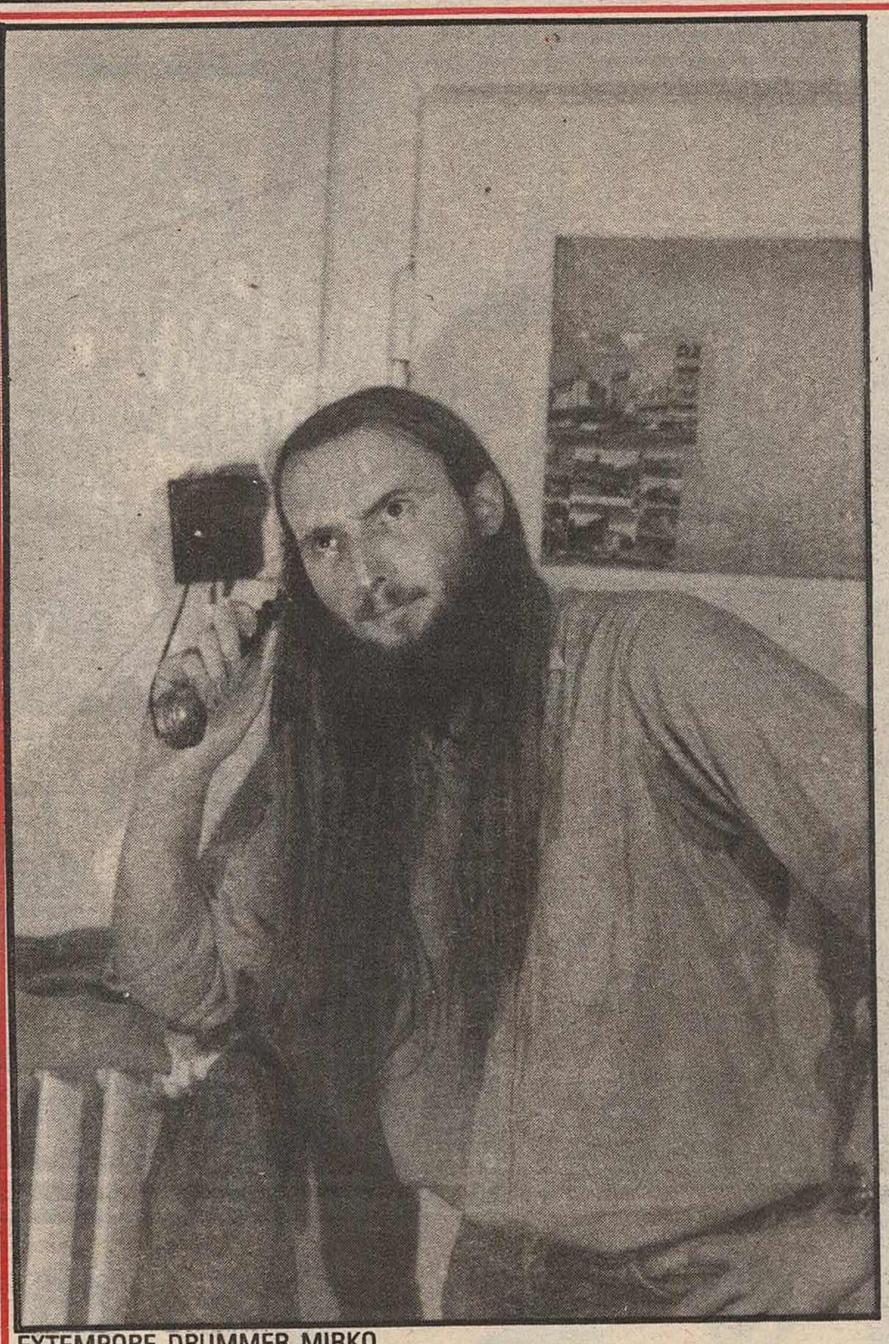
"I do a bit. I don't believe in throwing together a bunch of session men, although I've been one meself. I prefer a band, there's something in that permanence that isn't there if you just do it as a job and take the money.

"Then again, time mellows the bad memories. The people who remember Traffic probably forget the terrible gigs. But I do miss it, yeah. Which is why I'm going to do it again."

You said that three years ago.

"Did I? Oh!"

You can't get much more indecisive than that. But it's entirely Steve Winwood's prerogative — though it won't make his return any easier. He's been content to dip at the water's edge, but if he means it he'll have to get wet all over. Like his diver.



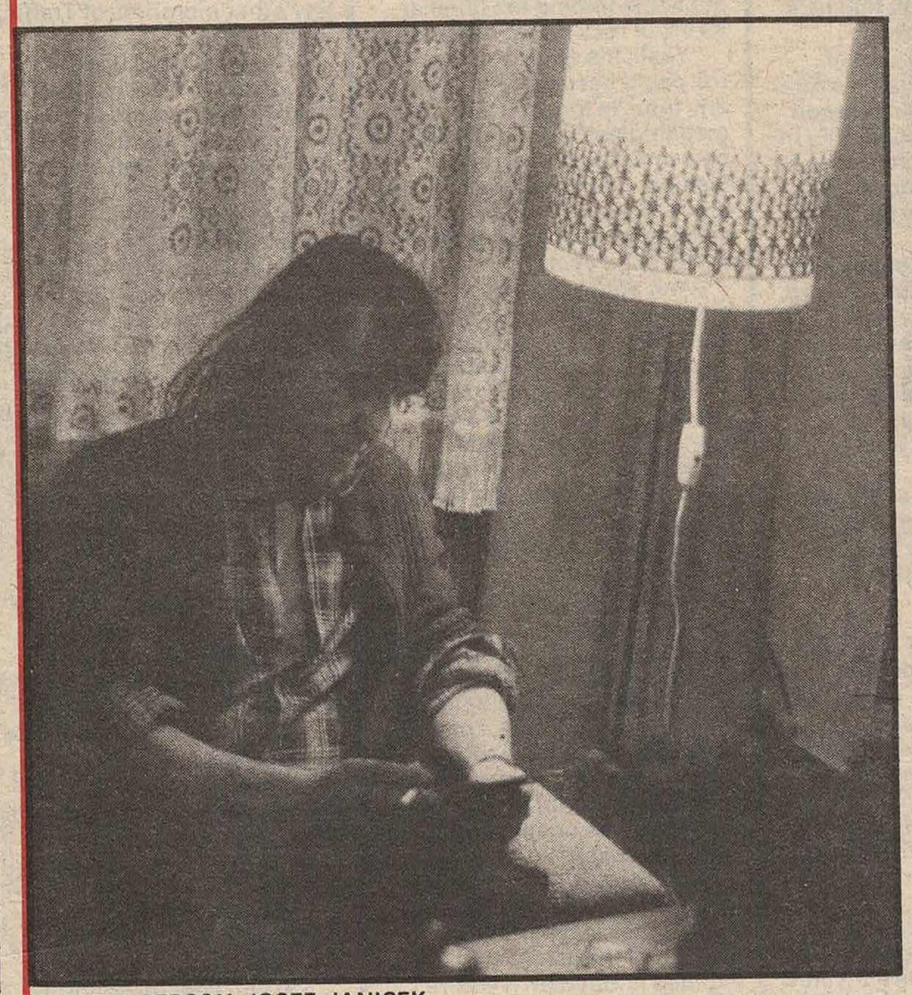
EXTEMPORE DRUMMER MIRKO

CZECHMA

THE FRUSTRATIO SHARING A PARTY

'NOT ALL THAT IS NOT FORBIDDEN IS ALL

CHRIS BOHN JOURNEYS INTO THE HEART OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. IT PULSES WITH FEAR. BUT BANDS REFUSE TO BE INTIMIDATED INTO SELLING THEIR SOULS TO THE PARTY. THOSE WHO CAPITULATE GET THE CHANCE TO MAKE RECORDS AND PLAY CONCERTS; THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE LEARNT TO LIVE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF UNEASE. THEY CIRCULATE TAPES AND PLAY IN BEDROOMS, BASEMENTS AND PRIVATE PARTIES. FOR THEM FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS SOMETHING MORE VITAL AND HEARTFELT THAN CONFORMING TO THE AMBIVALENT DEMANDS OF SOCIALIST REALISM.



PLASTIC PERSON JOSEF JANICEK

THE GAUNT Ostbahnhof station in Berlin's Russian sector is a sombre introduction to the East, but its *Third Man* gloom is offset by the bustling companionship of travellers waiting for the Prague-Budapest express.

Westerners, me included, can't hide an aura of uneasy anticipation that manifests itself in nervous glances from the clock to the train indicator; not that there's any real threat — just a feeling brought on by the sudden, alienating loss of colour on crossing the wall. Eventually relieved by the train's arrival, I enter a compartment full of young army conscripts, who inquisitively look me over before continuing their raucous replay of Chaplin's *Modern Times* screened on East German TV the night before.

They were really tickled by the scene in which Char-lee is nailed by the cops for political agitation when all he did was innocently pick up a red flag fallen from the back of a lorry. And just when they're looking forward to next week's *The Gold Rush,* someone dampens their spirits by reminding them of a parade the same night . . .

Exit soldiers, enter a sailor and his friend heading for a weekend in Budapest. Why Budapest? It's a lot more relaxed there, they reply, the next best thing to travelling West.

"East Germany one big jail," murmurs one sullenly. And for young people it's a long term sentence (until retirement when you can finally leave the country) rendered all the more frustrating by their ready access to West German media. Eager to talk music, the duo regularly watch the West German marathon *Rockpalast,* which brings them as close as they can get to live gigs by the likes of Patti Smith and The Police.

Leaving the cocoon-like comfort of the train compartment, I say goodbye to the Germans and whisper a tentative hello to Prague.

ON THE surface Prague has remained unshaken by the momentous events that have unsettled its citizens since the war. Neither the uprising against the Nazis in 1945 nor the Communist takeover three years later did much damage to the city, and whatever scars were left by the Soviet led invasion of '68 have long since healed.

Which is probably why it's difficult to equate this beautiful medieval city with its status as a capital of one of the most repressive regimes inside the Eastern bloc (directly behind East Germany in terms of its loyalty to Moscow). The feeling persists in the city's well stocked shopping centres. No lengthy food queues or empty shelves here. Bohemia has always been a wealthy, industrious province and its economic status hasn't changed much.

If the Czech Communists have learnt one thing, it's that a well-fed nation is easier to control than a hungry one — as events in Poland attest. More fruitful then, as one Czech dissident pointed out, to play Big Sister dispensing sugar-coated pills than Big Brother waving a heavy stick; but the essence is the same: COMPLETE CONTROL.

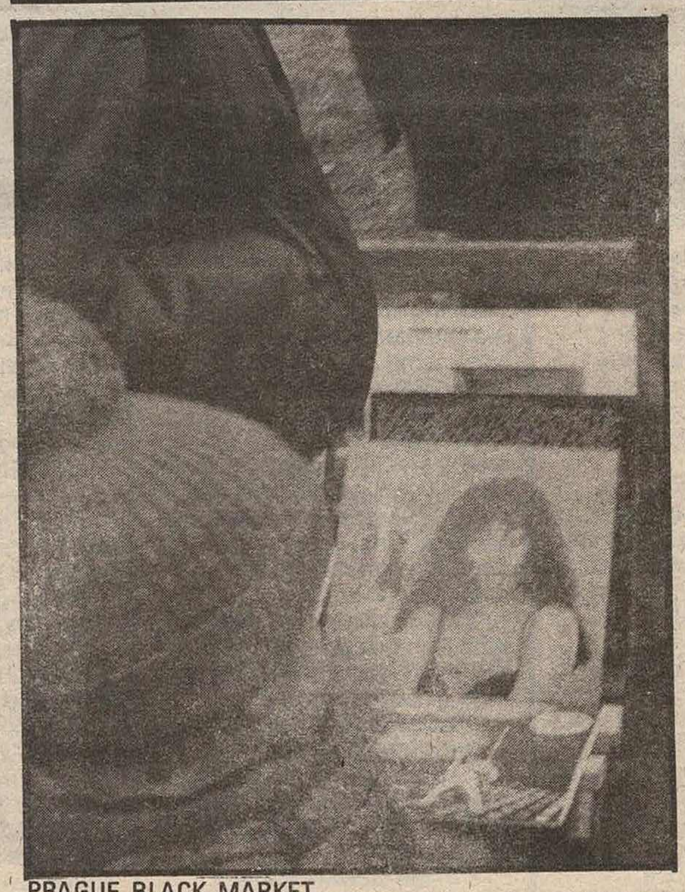
And the mistake Alexander Dubcek, Party First Secretary and inspiration behind the short-lived thaw, was allowing it to slip away; or so Moscow interpreted the increased freedoms he gave the Czech people.

Today Dubcek's name has been scrubbed from the tourist guide book and he's never mentioned officially.

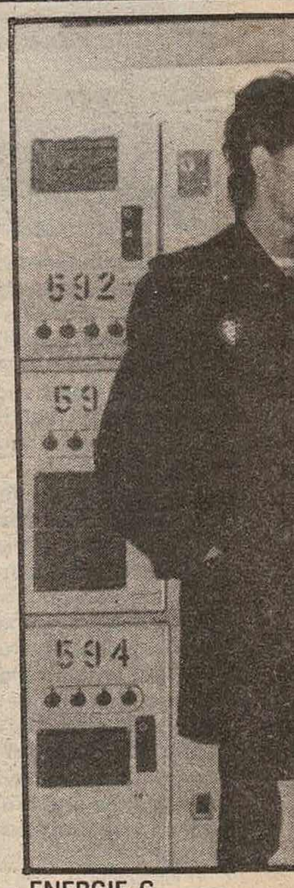
One of the more open manifestations of Czechoslovakia's shortlived "liberty" was a beat boom that echoed Western Europe's. Likewise it blossomed into psychedelia, with bands like The Primitives leading the way. When the authorities started showing interest, their guitarist Josef Janicek left to form Plastic People, Czechoslovakia's most notorious band, who helped form a bond between the rock and intellectual movements in the dissident artist group Charter 77.

The music's uncontrollable nature inevitably meant the clampdown, thereby forcing any worthwhile bands underground. (All this is well documented in the superb booklet accompanying Plastic People's Western-produced album 'Egon Bondy's Happy Hearts Club Banned'.)

The authorities acknowledge youth demand for music by licensing their own bands, but they're predictably awful. And naturally the kids aren't fooled — I



PRAGUE BLACK MARKET



ENERGIE G

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NS OF Y LINE

LOWED HERE'

— CZECH JUDGE, 1967

ALL PIX BIBA KOPF

mean who could take any band seriously which sought party approval, thereby allowing them to dictate song content, onstage behaviour and even the running order of records.

The reverse side of the coin is, obviously, that musicians want to work and the more purely instrumental bands aren't likely to upset the authorities anyway.

come bands unwilling to cramp their expression in official channels risk persecution and imprisonment?

In the West pop music might have been irretrievably corrupted by the twin figureheads of trash aesthetics and commerce, but behind the Iron Curtain playing it is something akin to a mission. And going by all accounts hundreds of bands do, only they're forced so far underground they're practically impossible to find.

There's always a brisk trade in Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart records (two important formative influences on the Czech rock scene), Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground are popular too, as are freeform and experimental albums, and — yes, it's spread this far — heavy metal and pomp.

These days there's always a bunch of eager hopefuls waiting for new wave and punk records. Someone I

FROG'S PHLEGM (PIC ANON)

Consequently jazz rock fusion music was popular for a while in the '70s, until new wave shot some vigour into the best of the older bands.

The official Czech label Supraphon does license a few Western records, like Elton John, Santana and fusion bands like Mahavishnu Orchestra and Weather Report — but only after Czech emigres Jan Hammer and Miroslav Vitous, respectively, moved on.

With practically nothing worth listening to on the official scene, kids naturally look elsewhere for entertainment. And only when you join them in the search do you realise the depth of repression in Czechoslovakia — and just how vital a media pop music is. Otherwise why are the authorities so frightened by it? Why should owning a Plastic People album mean trouble? How

SUNDAY IS a sacred day in Prague. It's the day when some workers, who've spent the week conserving their energy, earn twice as much doing private jobs at black market rates. It's also a good day to go shopping.

Blindfold yourself, spin round three times and hey presto! The record mart.

Stretching along a muddy ledge in one of the city's suburban foothills, up to a 1,000 people meet here weekly to buy, sell or swop Western records. It's almost a family outing and a carnival atmosphere surrounds the morning. Parents root out illicit jazz or James Last records; young kids display pop posters from Western magazines; their older brothers and sisters check out the week's disco, heavy metal or Europop bargains.

Name your poison and someone's likely to have it.

met had bought PiL's 'The Metal Box' in its original canister, and coming up the road is someone with albums by The Stranglers and Wire to offload.

The market is largely a meeting place for people selling or exchanging unwanted or taped records sent by Western relatives. But there are of course plenty of opportunists who, through illicit currency dealings, collect the marks and dollars necessary to make bulk mail order purchases, subsequently to sell the records at heavily inflated prices. Similarly, other traders lower the market's innocent standing by selling jeans and watches.

They're the people the police pounce on first during their periodic raids. But sensing perhaps the secret police or informers in the crowd, the market like as not shifts to a new location before anyone is busted. And unless anyone's foolish enough to be caught with a handful of the same album, the police usually let casual buyers go.

Maybe it's their idea of a safety valve . . .

Western records are a valuable source of information to be referred to, not to be copied. Czechoslovakia has established over the past decade rich, vital traditions of its own anyway, so anything new from the West acts more as a spur than booty. If you need any proof look to Plastic People.

Back in the '60s when psychedelic bands spouted magic without really understanding it, PP, and their forerunners The Primitives had the advantage of living in a city with a much more powerful magical presence than San Francisco. Alchemists occupied a street of their own, Golden Lane, winding down from the castle, where, incidentally, Franz Kafka lived for a while. (The useful official guide denies the street's magic connections). The famous European magician Paracelcus passed through Prague, too.

It seeped into the city's music, any airy leanings counterbalanced — in Plastic People's case — by their love of the Velvet Underground's raw-edged guitar. Their first album was written with the 47 year old poet/writer Egon Bondy, who has been a constant thorn in the establishment paw for decades.

A by all accounts bizarre figure, he reinterpreted the philosophy of the world from a Marxist viewpoint in six volumes. But his views were too extreme for the official party line.

Additionally, his challengingly heavy scatological lyrics, which confronted orthodox puritanism head on, helped earn Plastic People an almost sub-human reputation with the authorities, who called the band pigs and animals as part of the campaign which led to the arrest and imprisonment of some members and followers.

I met one of these "pigs", Josef Janicek, for a short conversation. A quiet, introverted man, our discussion is hampered by my lack of Slovak and his poor English, making it difficult to stick to the agreed subject of music. Understandably, Janicek and the band are pissed off that they're always treated on a political level, often leaving their music untouched.

But it's impossible to talk round the realities of their persecution. Even as we're talking, the police might be checking to see if he's at home.

He tells me about the last concert Plastic People played almost a year ago.

"We found a house in the country about 150 kilometres from Prague and maybe about 200 people showed up. We started playing at 10 pm and it was over by 1 am and everybody went home to Prague. The police didn't find out about it until two weeks later and when they did, they destroyed the house. They said it was too close to a power station and it posed a security threat, but that wasn't true."

He adds optimistically: "But there are plenty more houses."

The authorities' persistent harassment of The Plastic People highlights their fear of music.

"They're afraid of art that is not under their wings," Janicek concurs. "They know that culture has a very big influence on young people."

The accumulative effects of arrests and busts manifested themselves in the far more introverted 'Passion Play', their second album released in the West. Its deeply rooted pessimism contrasts heavily with the joyous, liberating music of their first album. But, as one observer points out, it's difficult to criticise it on that basis unless you've run the same gauntlet of experiences.

He says, "Continually oppressed by the police and ignored by most of society, The Plastic People transferred the sacrifice of themselves into the Easter story of the crucifixion of Christ. Their genuine hurt appeared on the record and lots of friends outside Czechoslovakia said the record was too depressive. But they should compare it to the reality of PP's situation.

"The radical left is mostly theory," he continues, "and if these radicals got in touch with this system, they might feel as beaten and as down as the Plastic People of this period."

Fortunately, these days Josef is more content, his interest in music rekindled by the unlikely pairing of punk and Irish folk music.

THERE'S A popular joke in Czechoslovakia that goes something like this.

Policeman: Hey, chief, I just found this penguin in the street. What should I do with it?

Chief *(exasperated)* Well, take it to the zoo.

(Later on his way home, the chief sees the man still has the bird) I thought I told you to take it to the zoo!

PC: I did, Sir, and now we're going to the movies....

The state's unnaturally large police force is the butt of the sort of stupid jokes English people make about the Irish. But in this case deservedly. However, the joke can get sour.

CONTINUES OVER

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Walking through Wenceslas Square, a policeman stops me for a spot check, asking for identity papers. When I start talking English he waves me on with a smile. Other people, I'm told, have spent 24 hours fretting in cells for not having their papers with them.

At least you can see the uniformed variety. Not so easy to spot secret policemen or informers in public places, though.

One lunchtime I go into a pub with friends met over in Prague. Suddenly, my drinking partner's face blanches and he abruptly ushers us out again.

"What's up?" I ask.

"I just recognised a secret policeman," he replies. There's no problem, he insists, but its safer not to be seen in the company of strangers.

Laughed at and reviled though they may be, they're also feared. Their unpopularity can work in favour of would-be victims, as most everybody is unwilling to co-operate — excepting loyal party members and their ilk.

It is help not so much volunteered out of compassion for the victim as also looking after number one.

Czech people, I'm repeatedly told, are wary of signing anything that commits them to a point of view which might be used against them later — be they council officials asked to support their belief in an artist, say, on paper, or a police witness asked to sign statements. Who knows when the wind might change direction? The rash of executions which followed party purges in the early '50s are not yet forgotten.

PUBLIC TIMIDITY combined with friendly co-operation saved one band called Extempore from a similar fate as Plastic People. The police intended to nail them at a concert, but they couldn't get any reliable witnesses to press complaints against them — a popular one being bad language or lewd stage movements.

Extempore were lucky that time, but living under constant fear of prosecution hasn't done their sanity much good, as their leader Mikolas (saxist, guitarist, vocalist and writer) states.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm walking on the edge between lunacy and laughter."

Describing themselves, as a rock and jokes band, with a strong dada base, their music is in the Czech tradition of merrymaking balanced by passionate soloing and a sardonic line in cutting lyrics. All in their late 20s, the band admit that the scarcity of gigs — a dozen a year is rarely reached — tends to turn the music in on itself.

But new wave/punk influences checked their more introverted moments and their latest set — based on a song cycle called '15 Dreams Of The City Inhabitant' is an exhilarating fusion of tense thrashes, chants and sweet, controlled moments. The songs, according to an English speaking colleague of the band, are "grotesque ... full of black humour, absurdity, blasphemy, anarchy and ... cryptograms."

They preview the concert to an audience of one — me — in a bedroom that serves as a rehearsal room.

His rapturous description proves right. Check the horrible surrealist passage from 'Under The Tram': *"I want to vomit/When I look at myself/I have neither arms nor legs/I'm completely helpless."*

It's not one for the watchdogs of socialist realism who demand greater respect for the human condition; in this messy torso they're not likely to see a metaphor for modern man in Prague.

Extempore are eager to be heard by anyone and one evening my presence constitutes just the audience they need to run through their set as if they're playing a concert hall. Despite the cramped surroundings of the bedroom, the music pours out of them, like water from a burst dam. The "concert" over, they feel as if all those months rehearsing haven't been in vain.

Yet even here in their own home they are not totally secure.

"Someone might call the police to complain about the noise," one says. It's a common enough occurence for bands in England, but when such a call could be used as an excuse for searching the place, bands must treat their neighbours a little more warily.

THE COMMUNIST revolution in Czechoslovakia didn't so much do away with class differences or inequalities as reverse them.

Thus, in education children of traditional working class parents would have a better chance at winning a place in further education than the children of intellectuals or the likes of schoolteachers — whatever their respective qualifications. Similarly people find themselves promoted less on the basis of ability than their loyalty to the Party, which leads to a whole new set of antagonisms, especially in the cultural field.

Somebody told me that the head of West Bohemia's biggest library used to be a tin miner who probably hadn't read anything outside party manuals. While there's an element of bitterness in what he says, imagine how a band would feel auditioning before a committee as equally well qualified.

But education poses a thornier problem. As in the West colleges turn out even more graduates unable to find suitable work. Yet because unemployment doesn't exist officially in Czechoslovakia, they're forced into intellectually unsatisfying jobs, where they grow increasingly despondent. Classed as *intellectual invalids,* they're lumped together with the malcontents and vagrants as potential troublemakers. Some are forced into action, to join dissident groups like Charter 77; others just give up.

But the strongest bond between workers and intellectuals is forged by their common enemy. Thus, the union of rock and roll and the intellectuals of Charter 77 has done more to break down distinctions than an unfair education system.

One observer perhaps put it most succinctly: "Plastic People's music describes equally the feeling of intellectual invalids and workers living outside society. Rebels are always beyond class — isolation always breaks down barriers between people."

OF PRAGUE'S three known punk bands, Zikkurat, Dog Soldiers and Energie G, I only got to meet the students of the last. From a strong middle class background, — three of their fathers are architects — I sense some resentment towards them.

"Well, in Czechoslovakia there are only a very limited number of people playing electric instruments, because they are so expensive," says a critic. "So if you have a rich father, it's naturally easier to get hold of one."

More importantly, perhaps, they have easier access to information and it depends on how they use it. They might argue — but in fact they don't — that they've got more to lose through their involvement in music.

As it is, they formed the band last April as a hobby and they were invited to play a few gigs two weeks later.

"We forgot everything we learnt," says singer Krystof. "It was terrible. They turned the electricity off after two numbers."

The night I catch them rehearsing in a deep basement that, like the truly subterranean underground train system, will double as a bomb shelter in an emergency, they gamely run through a set composing of Brit-punk derivatives and a version of 'Ulster Boy' that would have put some Sham performances to shame.

"I know what you'll say," anticipates Krystof. "You've heard it all before."

Didn't say a word.

"Well, we have plans for the music to change this winter. I know that we're only playing very fast, very hard punk now, but before this group some of us had never played."

Punk is nevertheless a suitable medium for channelling the frustrations of living in a harsh, totalitarian state, and they do enliven it all with a touch of humour — especially when Krystof starts reeling off the band's subject metter: boredom; Prague being a dirty town; the easiness with which people accept their lot — all figure strongly.

It's as if he's suggesting they have more of a reason to protest than the punks of Western Europe, and in a sense he would be right. It's impossible to take seriously the rantings of our Oi! brigade.

Protesting about boredom actually means something when most of your gigs are played in a basement. At least their music is charged with the energy and conviction to support their statements . . .

Later, on the streets again, their drummer — true to form, a class clown — yells out, "George Davis is innocent!"

Slowly he turns to me and asks sheepishly, "Er, who is George Davis?"

Forget George Davis, friend, you've got more worthwhile campaigns at home.

ANOTHER NIGHT another basement, another dress rehearsal. This time I'm taken on a tour through Prague's narrow, winding streets past the secret police HQ to see The Classic Rock And Roll Band. On the way we meet a gangly, lank haired youth proudly clutching a new horde of records. Furtively looking over his shoulder, he pulls back the bag to reveal Joy Division's 'Closer', 'Stations Of The Crass' and The Plasmatics record. An unlikely mixture, but it's nice to know that tribal barriers have yet to be erected here.

The Classic Rock And Roll Band are ironically a contemporary outfit some 20 years too late. Rock and roll is relatively new to Czechoslovakia. They were still suffering from the rigours of its most brutal Stalinist period when Elvis Presley scandalised the Western world. Little chance of him getting any exposure in the Eastern block then, in the pre-satellite days of easier media manipulation.

Predictably denounced as fascist in the '50s, rock and roll got lost in the noise of big beat during the more liberal '60s only to resurface in 1968 with the Classic Rock And Roll Band. It took them some ten years and the loss of their founder / singer — who defected during a Spanish holiday — to really break through, but these days they enjoy both a semi-legal and alternative status.

Good rock and roll performed with the authenticity that Shakin' Stevens brings it, if not with his flair, always finds a market, especially in one so starved as Czechoslovakia's.

I ARRIVE in Prague in time for one of its periodic clampdowns, meaning even the licensed bands are having problems getting gigs. Worse, the annual Autumn Prague Jazzdays concert, which was to feature Western bands like This Heat, was frozen out by impossible conditions imposed by the cultural authorities.

All bands had to supply lyrics, running orders, between song patter and a description of their stage act beforehand, while semi-pro or amatueur bands had to find sponsors. If the conditions weren't met the organisers would have to answer for them. Naturally, they called the whole thing off, so the sum total of Western bands who have played in Prague in the '70s still stands at Nice, Blossom Toes, Colliseum, The Art Bears and Suzi Quatro.

Conditions are bad enough already to kill promising careers. I heard of one musician who got so disillusioned with the effort he sold his guitar and bought a car instead. An art school styled duo have fashioned an album's worth of material and designed a sleeve, knowing that neither will ever get published.

Other pioneering groups of the '70s have since split or broke out. Plastic People contemporaries DG307 lost their lead singer to Sweden. Another band, Kilhets, achieved a swift notoriety with their few performances between '78-9. Like many Czech groups their concerts featured aspects of performance art; they all wore masks, but partly for security reasons. They used to open their sets with ten minutes of silence — "A natural form of expression for me," claims their leader Peter Krecan.

One night he was irritated by the docility of the audience and started calling them animals. Unfortunately, the police heard about it, and when Krecan got wind of the news he fled to Munich. He's not at all happy in the West, but we'll go into that in a future issue.

A name constantly cropping up in musical conversations is middle-aged accordionist Jiri Cert / Jim The Devil, who apparently writes extraordinary proletarian songs which he performs with stunning compassion accompanied by heart-rending accordion playing.

Hundreds more bands will inevitably go undocumented; most will remain unknown to Czechs, never mind us. But no matter how tough the authorities get, regardless of victimisations, more and more will keep popping up.

In Czechoslovakia both the spirit and the flesh are willing.

While rock exists there the regime will never feel totally secure. The only sleep a totalitarian state gets comes after all alien ideas have been crushed; the very foundation of totalinarianism is a purity of thought unsullied by anybody else's.

If you don't think music has any political value, just look at the effort such states make to stamp it out. They might succeed in driving it underground — and consequently strengthening it — but they'll never snuff it out completely. Rock's importance in the East is its ready accessibility.

Prohibited books, one observer tells me, are typewritten, beautifully hand-bound and illegally circulated in necessarily limited numbers. A good rock song, however, takes a matter of minutes to communicate its message, and it's easy to tape and pass on. That's why some Czechs were amused by the inference in an *NME* headline that they'd never heard Plastic People (Yes, it is read in Czechoslovakia).

Rock will never topple a totalitarian regime but in Czechoslovakia it sure as hell keeps it on the run.

PRAGUE IS not an easy place to leave, but it's still a relief to be aboard the Budapest-bound train. Three Polish students sitting in the next seats have brought their own spirits with them — vodka included. And naturally one fuels the other.

"POLISH STRIKE GUT!" shrieks one at the complacent beer-drinking Czechs sitting behind them.

"COMMUNIST PARTEI SCHEISSE!" he continues, ramming home the point.

The Czechs, their security suddenly ruffled, throw back a few hostile gestures. But the young Pole needs a whole lot more vodka before he finally falls asleep. Later at the Hungarian border a Czech guard rouses him to check his visa. He drowsily comes awake a bit too slowly for the guard, who gives him two thudding slaps on the back of his head to speed up the process.

My, it's really touching to see how some Eastern folk treat their own.

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ALBUMS

RAY CHARLES
Brother Ray *(London)*

RAY CHARLES' name can still inspire a flutter of anticipation: that voice, which sparked off so many imitations, is still one of the greatest; and he remains a master of the soulful grunt and the half-laughing aside.

On 'Don't You Love Me Anymore' he takes an ordinary ballad and makes you cry, despite the slightly alcoholic string arrangement. He dominates on the uptempo numbers too, while 'Compared To What' and 'Ophelia' show that he never has to overstate a melody to make it come alive.

Charles uses several different arrangers on the album, but to little effect. Despite a full brass section on several tracks, the sound is surprisingly tame, the horns somewhat two-dimensional. Lines which should, as in the Stax tradition, lend soulful punctuation, end up very limp, adding nothing and sometimes even *destroying* the feel of the song.

The same could be said for the whole band. There's a notable lack of depth in the rhythm section which, considering the clarity and directness of Charles' style, is strange and rather sad. Charles' own arrangement of Frankie Miller's 'I Can't Change It' works well, though: a powerful gospel choir, rolling blues piano and howling synthesiser make it one of the strongest tracks — Ray Charles as he should be heard.

Charles can still communicate as well as always. A lacklustre backing band may do a lot of damage, but it can't obscure the genius of the singer. For this reason alone, 'Brother Ray' is worth a listen.

Dorota Koc

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Warts'n'All: Live At The 101 Club *(101 Records)*
Beyond The Groove *(101 Records)*

THE COMPILATION album is a great idea that rarely seems to work in practice; and these, part of a series recorded at South London's best regular venue, suffer the same problem as most: interesting to listen to, but not really consistent enough to warrant buying.

'Warts'n'All' is actually as dismal as its name and cheapo packaging suggest. The numbers were presumably one take only, so we are treated to fluffed beginnings by Local Heroes SW9 and a truly awful audience singalong with The Mechanics that is simply a waste of vinyl. Two tracks each are also included from The Thompson Twins (disappointing), Jane Kenway And Strange Behaviour (average), Deaf Aids, and Phillip Gayle (yawn), all injected with between-song raps and applause just to remind us that it really is *live* folks. Zzzz . . .

Thankfully, 'Beyond The Groove' drops such effects and gets on with the music, kicking off with The Flatbackers jubilantly taking the piss in 'Pumping Iron'. This is unfortunately followed with a wave of banality going by the names of The Fix, Modern Man, RPM, and yet more Mechanics, though Endgames distinguish themselves by using keybpards, sax, and a little imagination on their 'Joy of Life'.

The second, and by far the best, side offers a fresher, keyboards-dominated sound and fairly promising tracks from both God's Toys and The Electric Eels; as well as a novel song by Thane about traffic jams, Shrink's vaguely disturbing but melodramatic 'The Doll', and John Dummer and Helen April's little ditty, 'Own Up (If You're Over 25)'.

Although intended to showcase what's happening in the smaller clubs, these albums really only serve to show how many stale and derivative ideas are dragging around them at the moment. Pass the Orange Juice, someone, we need it . . .

Sheryl Garratt

Blurt's Ted Milton strongly denying that their follow-up . . . .

. . . to 'My Mother Was A Friend Of An Enemy Of The People' . . .

. . . will be entitled 'And Father Knew Lloyd Bridges'.

Pix: Peter Anderson.

It's a Fac up, baby, Fac up

VARIOUS ARTISTS
A Factory Quartet *(Factory)*

The Durutti Column: Side One

THREE TRACKS produced by the very super Martin Hannet. Vini Reilly's supple instrumentals effectively occupy a placid musical terrain somewhere twixt the hypnotic and the somnabulistic. Reilly's guitar playing is meticulously structured on 'For Mimi', a smooth fusion of finger-picking and bass with Donald Johnstone's drumming providing the perfect human metronome factor.

Reilly's keyboards are more to the fore on 'Belgian Friends' and 'Self Portrait', but the side as a whole fits together well to grant the listener a worthwhile statement from the composer.

One could feasibly refer to Reilly as a "rich man's Mike Oldfield" — certainly the unpretentious, placid quality to this music is totally bereft of the grandiose pomposity of the bombastic Oldfield — but parallels seem more essentially pertinent to Can. Yet where Can's more pensive instrumental work has an all-pervading teutonic quality to it, Vini Reilly's music is quintessentially English, methodically structured with a strong 'pastoral' essense.

The Durutti Column side to this Factory double-set refreshes the parts that other sides fail to reach.

Nick Kent

Kevin Hewick: Side Two

THE RUNT among this sampler, the presence of Kevin Hewick says much about the fancy of Factory, their perverse sense of humour and their inverse narrow mindedness.

It's not that Factory take risks, although from comfy rock confines everything they do seems chancy, simply that they make instant decisions about dubious activities and by the time it's all been Fac-cessed, run through the magical mystery tunnel of Fac-ingenuity, it ends up probably palatable if not madly brilliant.

Only Factory or a subsidiary of RCA or Pye would deal with a tediously malevolent, moderately voiced minstrel like Kevin Hewick, a cocksure contemporary reminder of the type of solo agit-folk creatures liberal bigots and doped dreamers support blindly even when they're being criticised slap in the face. On side two we hear Hewick live, not fitting into two holes: on his hols on the last Roy Harper tour; on his toes stuck in the three day 'Fac at the Moonlight' span.

The songs Hewick scratches through are poorly focussed 'Marjory Razorblade' — 'Folkjoke-opus' bits and pieces: poems acoustically pumped up into shapeless shapes, the sort of opening up that in the past inspired closed up cult followings.

Hewick songs generally reveal obsessions and fascinations that don't draw me in or damn me, and mix real niceness with gritty nastiness, proud lyricism with needly attack. I've bitten my nails off listening through these seven songs at least 15 times: I'm in favour if hardly in love, undoubtedly because Hewick's on Factory, and 'm biased so I've bothered. First impression was total boredom. I'm still bored, but I'm noticing things.

And if heroes can become bores, maybe this bore Hewick can become a hero. Now Fac off.

Paul Morley

Blurt: Side Three

BLURT SUBTRACT the riff you first thought of. Their music seems permanently off-centre; it hinges on a bass-line that's never played, even though it seems obvious that the personnel who actually are present to play are fully aware of what it is and when it changes.

The Blurt bit is 'A Factory Quartet"s finest moment; noisier and more quarrelsome than Vini Reilly's pastoral romanticism, and certainly far more rewarding than Kevin Hewick's sub-Al Stewart folkie complacency or The Royal Family And The Poor's highly conceptual harangues. They do four songs: 'Puppeteer', 'Dyslexia' (a series of departures from the standard 'Dyslexia Rules K.O.' theme), 'Some Come' and 'Benighted', which works out as three funk-outs and an almost-blues. The latter boasts a particularly nifty piece of musical legerdemain when the sax part that enters halfway through shifts the guitar line into what sounds like 6/8.

The guitar and drums of Peter Creese and Jake Milton (respectively) generally restrict their role to that of backdrop for the whoops, trills, squawks and lectures of Ted Milton, who displays an admirable flair for melodic, sonic and rhythmic improvisation throughout. Can this man make noises? He certainly can.

Blurt are the most appropriately named group encountered for some considerable period of time, and — as remarked in a Dury context a couple of lifetimes ago — it's the incompleteness of their music which provides its grab. Don't just listen, *participate* (great music for bass players to practice to). As Brilleaux would say, eight bars on the bass.

Charles Shaar Murray

The Royal Family And The Poor: Side Four

HERE ARE the young men, but what the hell are they up to now?

Manchester's Factory were arguably *the* record company of 1980. The past twelve months has seen them combine a refreshingly individual vision with a certain style and hipness, playing their cards with disarming cryptic humour and producing some of the best sides of the year in the process.

And there's no reason why 1981 shouldn't be equally as good, once the inevitable backlash has been weathered, but 'A Factory Quartet' is hardly the most auspicious of starts. Four bands and four sides of fun vinyl for five guineas (that's £5.25 to all decimalised dudes), this double album is a potentially good idea which has wound up as little more than a wasteful exercise in self-indulgence.

Factory don't quite merit the jibe that was once made in the direction of Stiff — that the label has become nothing more than the sum of its art department — but 'A Factory Quartet' as an album fails dismally to live up to the trim elegance of its neat packaging.

The Royal Family And The Poor seem to be something of a Factory (in) joke. Their music is sub-rather than post-Joy Division, delivered with all the inaccessibility and conceit of The Pop Group at their worst.

Their contribution to the album consists of three tracks proper and three 'dirges', all of which sound plodding enough at 45, let alone 33. They dabble dingily in swathes of PiLish synths and that familiar Can doublebeat drumming. The production — "Another Hannet and Nagle job" — is formularised and cliched while some of the lyrical gems would find it hard to plunge greater depths of pomposity: *"In the kingdom of consumption, the citizen is king"* and even *"It's how you hide your submission to the dominant banality"*.

The whole exercise is a grim (ha!) reminder of just how on-the-ball a certain Joe Strummer quote in last week's *NME* was: "I hate music that is so concerned with being new that it forgets to have any soul."

To that, all I can add is that TRFATP have as much to do with moving modern music as the Q-Tips have to do with soul.

Is this what happens when the label becomes bigger than the music?

Adrian Thrills

LIGHTNING STRIKES

VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Guinness Album: Hits Of The '70s *(CBS)*

ESSENTIALLY the soundtrack to *The Guinness Book Of Hits Of The '70s*, 'The Guinness Album' comprises four sides, 35 tracks, of UK chart successes, from Mungo Jerry in 1970 to 'We Don't Talk Anymore' in 1979. As such, the assortment of sounds is a motley one indeed, where Ian Dury ('Rhythm Stick') rubs shoulders with Olivia/Travolta, and Roxy Music ('Dance Away') with David Soul.

If your system can cope with all these wild stylistic lurches without undue queasiness, then maybe you'll find an acceptable percentage of pearls among the pigs — whether that means Free and T Rex or New Seekers and Osmonds. In the end however, only one side bears uninterrupted listening: that's side four which, after starting with Abba's sublime 'Dancing Queen', concentrates on black music — and as usual it's the black hits which sound the least dated, the most timeless. The Jacksons' 'Show You The Way To Go' and Freda Payne's 'Band Of Gold' soar above the dross and mediocrity which seem to have dominated the decade's charts.

As a bonus, you get fact-packed sleeve notes by Paul Gambaccini. If carefully memorised, they will make you a walking fund of pop trivia and a bore to be avoided.

Paul Du Noyer

JIMI HENDRIX
Woke Up This Morning And Found Myself Dead *(Red Lightnin')*

EVER SINCE Himself popped off ten years ago, assorted oddments, outtakes and off-cuts (as well as reissues off the official stuff) have bubbled to the surface with the regularity of so many hiccups, and they've generally proved to be frustrating or disappointing.

'Woke Up This Etc' is, however, a genuine, certified curio. Recorded by Hendrix himself on a portable stereo machine (sound and balance therefore pretty much what you'd expect) in a New York club as a memento of an after-hours jam during which Hendrix and a thoroughly newtralised Jim Morrison collided with Johnny Winter and his band, it makes several things startlingly clear.

Thing the first: famous people slugging their way through a random collection of slow blues, funk riffs and recent hits don't necessarily sound any better than obscure people doing much the same thing. The Winter rhythm section come off as outrageously dull pair of plodders, and things don't improve one little bit when the absurdly bombastic and heavy-handed Buddy Miles takes over the drums on the second side.

Thing the second: no-one Hendrix ever played with seemed remotely capable of keeping up with him. Apart from an occasional semi-audible nifty bit from Winter himself, the band seem able to do no more than struggle along in Hendrix's wake. (No pun intended).

Thing the third: the man was amazing (to labour a point). As an example of how alarmingly 'Woke Up This Etc' oscillates between the sublime and the ridiculous, check out the long version of Elmore James' 'Bleeding Heart' that ends the first side: the first few guitar choruses that Hendrix takes are staggering in their intensity: blues guitar as expression and statement rather than stylised virtuosity or a barrage of ego-noise, but the number then degenerates into the stuff of purest farce as Jim Morrison, heavily under the influence of uncoolohol, delivers — via the vocals and harmonica — a devastating portrayal of a flaming asshole on the loose.

This stuff has been out before: once as a bootleg called 'Sky High' and once — in severely abridged form — as part of a DJM Hendrix compilation called 'For Real', but this particular edition will be of considerable interest to Hendrix collectors, inveterate '60s kids and devotees of rock stars in their (musical) underpants. Everybody else might as well give it an extremely wide berth.

Charles Shaar Murray

THE FACES
The Faces Featuring Rod Stewart *(Pickwick)*.

A ROUTINE cheapo compilation from the supermarket budget series. The cover shot catches the band in typical all-action pose: Rod Stewart drinking whisky, Ron Wood and Ian MacLagan on bitter, Kenny Jones on lager, Tetsu Yamauchi on Guinness.

It all seems a bit too recent to feel nostalgic about; the music inside, instead of oozing period charm, just sounds lumpy and dull and dated. Plain old-fashioned English rock. 'Cindy Incidentally' is the only track of any prominence, apart from the cover of McCartney's 'Maybe I'm Amazed'. A more imaginative choice of songs — including some from the 'Good As A Wink' LP and leaving out the duff singalong live stuff — might have helped, but as it is only Rod The Mod's 'Three Button Hand Me Down' and 'Had Me A Real Good Time' represent the band at its best.

Paul Du Noyer

NICK STRAKER BAND
A Walk In The Park *(CBS)*

THE TITLE track was maybe the worst single of '80. The rest of the album is indistinguishable from the single.

Paul Tickell

ROCKY SHARPE AND THE REPLAYS
Rock-It To Mars *(Chiswick)*

GET YOURSELF a doo-wop-by-numbers kit. First, put on the 52nd Street shades, grease your barnet down with '56 vintage oil slick, and then singalong to some fair, tenor-headed backing tracks by The Topliners. Of course, chances are that your female lead won't match Bobby Darin on 'Dream Lover' — then, he was one of the most talented all-rounders to head out of the original rock 'n' roll maelstrom. Possibly too, your mainman will fail to come within a million street-corners of Frankie Lymon on 'Teenager In Love', while collectively the four of you will manage to make 'Love Bug' sound dead boring — something that The Clovers never did. But with a little practice and a lot of enthusiasm, you'll end up just right for the cabaret circuit — like Rocky Sharpe and The Replays in fact.

Fred Dellar

Pic: Alec Byrne.

Hendrix the innovator: JH caught in a "clothes maketh the man a prat" pose 12 years before Spandau Ballet.

Randy Crawford pic: Chris Horler.

"Rod Stewart, man? Isn't that Rod McKuen in a kilt?"

RANDY CRAWFORD
Everything Must Change *(Warner Bros)*

RANDY CRAWFORD'S first (1976) Warner Brothers album reissued now, says the press release "due to public demand" — or, more accurately, in the hope of cashing in on her recent hit single. Crusader Joe Sample plays keyboards while Crusader-collaborator Larry Carlton arranges and plays guitar, but the album lacks the resilience and resonances of her latest 'Now We May Begin' LP. Some ordinary songs and the rather soft-centred strings take the album a little too close to MOR for my tastes, and Crawford is rarely able to reveal that emotional edge which can make her voice so affecting, though her stylish assurance *is* well evident. A useful item for completists but the simply curious are advised to start with 'Now We May Begin'.

Graham Lock

THE LURKERS
Last Will And Testament . . . Greatest Hit *(Beggars Banquet)*

FULHAM'S answer to the Ramones was no answer at all. The Brothers may have turned mindlessness into an art form but The Lurkers are too far gone in pig ignorance for that, as they follow one awful riff with another and throw in regular over-milked guitar solos. The band's penchant for oblivion (eg 'Pills' and 'Self-Destruct') isn't so much a darkly funny, nihilistic celebration as a complete abdication. Judging by this 18 track compilation, drawn from the two albums and handful of singles, they were no great loss.

Paul Tickell

ROCKING DOPSIE AND THE CAJUN TWISTERS
Big Bad Zydeco *(Sonet)*

THE LATEST episode in Rocking Dopsie's heroic attempt to take Zydeco music from the swamps of Louisiana and spread it throughout the whole wide world. Zydeco is blues-flavoured cajun, R&B *francais* whipped up on sax, washboard and accordian, as fierce and mellow as early rock'n'roll. 'Big Bad Zydeco', half of which was recorded live at Dingwall's, hangs faster and looser than Dopsie's previous Sonet records; and while, say, 'Zy De Blue' (my own favourite) might offer a better introduction to the music, the freewheeling exuberance of these latest cuts should please those converts made on the Twisters' recent European tours.

Graham Lock

EARTH WIND AND FIRE
Earth Wind and Fire *(Pickwick)*

THIS IS a re-issue of the first album that EW&F ever made, and it should have been left where it was. True, it has the same instrumental lineup as the present band, but that (and the presence of the White brothers) is the only connection between this grisly object and later recordings. It's badly produced, written, played and sung, and will only be of interest to people who are such EW&F freaks that they won't want to discriminate anyway. It's a bit like being given an out-of-focus snap of a spotty adolescent and being told that it's your favourite film star — you might be able to discern some similarity but are you going to hang it on your wall?

Dorota Koc

THE KINKS
The Kinks Collection *(Pickwick)*

24-TRACK double that includes most Kink hit singles up to and including 'Lola', plus a smattering of LP tracks — from the better known 'Stop Your Sobbin'' and 'Where Have All The Good Times Gone' to several cuts of distinctly lesser mettle. Not a bad selection, but the slapdash running order and puzzling omission of 'Days' and 'Autumn Almanac' mean it's probably worth rooting around the second-hand shops for the Pye 'Golden Hour' Kinks instead, if you want a wider range of their earlier material.

Graham Lock

FATBACK BAND
14 Karat *(Polydor)*

ALL FAT and no back.

Neil Norman

FRED FRITH
Gravity *(Ralph)*

'GRAVITY' opens with a laugh, which is more than appropriate, as the whole album's infused with a joy and humour quite at odds with what you might expect from a Frith solo album, given his oft-sombre excursions with Henry Cow and the cruelly overlooked Art Bears.

It's inspired by dance music from around the world, and in this respect bears some similarity to Aqsak Maboul's excellent 'Un Peu De L'Ame Des Bandits' album, which stepped a similar course; deeper similarities may be traced to AM prime mover Marc Hollander, who figures heavily throughout on alto sax and clarinets and the presence of other fellow Aqsaks, including (of course!) Chris Cutler, Fred's partner-in-time for many years.

Side one of 'Gravity' was recorded in Europe, side two in America, and the whole manages to convey a remarkable international flavour, taking the best parts of European seriousness and absurdity and Yankee gloss and hedonism, and combining them to produce something quite unique, a blend hinted at in his avant-garde rendering of 'Dancing In The Street', but best exemplified in the curiously cross-cultural 'A Career In Real Estate' and the mad Arabic atmosphere of 'The Hands Of The Juggler'.

There's much to surprise even Frith's most ardent and knowledgeable appreciators here — a much wider use of piano and violin than might be expected; and there's an airy openness to most of the pieces unheralded by his former work's often oppressive nature.

'Gravity' is a *positive* album, in all senses of the word, and has a warmth and honesty not present in most recent music — in any field you care to name. It makes those separate fields seem so arbitrary and redundant. As they are.

Andy Gill

VARIOUS ARTISTS
History Of Ska — The Golden Years 60-65 *(Studio 1)*

CURSORY 12 track ska compilation from the archives of what is and remains the most famous studio in the recording industry of Jamaica this past 20 years.

The choice is variable, if brief: with a pair of wistful Don Drummond instrumentals and one apiece from Roland Alphonso, the Skatalites and Blues Blasters; vocal solos from Delroy Wilson, Clancy Eccles, Lord Creator and the Andy & Joey duo; balladeers Doreen Schaeffer and Jackie Edwards duetting early blueprints of the present-day lovers rock, and one male group effort from The Wailers.

Peter Tosh pic: Kate Simon.

"Fred Frith, mon? Is he any relation to Fred Locks?"

The quality of the playing is the notable characteristic of the music, with some lovely horn arrangements counterpointing Drumbago and company in full drive. Here conveys the transitory tenor of Big Charlie's sweet harmonica break highlighting Andy & Joey's tympanic 'You're Wondering Now', of recent revival. The syncopated beat you might imagine from a record called 'Beeston Street Riff' by the Blues Blasters. Trombone of Don Drummond in lyrical flow portraying 'Don Cosmic' — barely stated syndrum added to the mix — or soaring on 'Jet Stream'. While Roland Alphonso's saxophone rings true to its title and quite as coyly on 'If I Were A Bell'.

There is Baptist exaltation from Clancy Eccles chanting the strains of 'Glory Hallelujah' in manner reminiscent of Toots; an excellent Wailers ska 'Love And Affection', wherein Bob Marley recalls previous hits 'Lonesome Feelings' and 'It Hurts To Be Alone' in his lyric in faithful Derrick Harriott style and Peter Tosh doo wops cooingly in El Dorados region; a very young, implacably cool Delroy Wilson pleas 'Can't You See'; more sentiment from Kentrick Patrick as Lord Creator with 'Golden Love' and Doreen & Jackie's exchange of promissory notes, 'The Vow' and 'Welcome You Back Home'.

Ska compilations are few, Studio 1 availability intermittent. The album under review is a US pressing particularly worth looking out for.

Penny Reel

THE SHAGGS
Philosophy Of The World *(Rounder — US Import)*

THE SHAGGS were three sisters, Betty, Helen and Dorothy Wiggin, who lived (and may still live) in Fremont, New Hampshire, a small New England town. Dorothy Wiggin wrote songs, they played guitars and drums, and sang in warbling, off-pitch voices. But their father, Austin Wiggin, must have been proud of them, because sometime around 1971 he rented time in a recording studio so the girls could record their songs. He also paid for the pressing of a couple of thousand copies of the resulting album, which quickly vanished into the annals of obscure cultdom.

Eight years later, time may have caught up with The Shaggs. Their album has been reissued. Ears accustomed to The Raincoats will still find The Shaggs out to lunch, but more acceptably so. They stand as an antecedent to the current acceptance of the inspired (or just plain whacky) amateur.

But the real value of this record is its enduring oddness. The Shaggs evoke a fantastic isolation, the kind that produces inbreeding and terrible skeletons in the closet. Everything here is made of failed intentions and missed goals. Their voices try to be church-choir sweet but fall far off the mark. Their lyrics are unbelievably innocent and child-like, but are also skewered, suspicious, as if they were the products of model nice girls trying to tell the world under their breath that their parents beat them. For all the surface sweetness-and-light, the Shaggs impart not an idyllic vision of small-town life but more the vague nightmareishness of a Nathaniel Hawthorne story.

Dorothy Wiggin couched her observations in sing-songy, nursery rhyme songs. Eventually, they grate, they are too precious, but at first they are fascinating.

The instrumental backing is fractured, as if the sisters were off in different rooms, playing different songs. The drumming seems especially random. The guitars, electric but barely amplified, strummed folkie style, are out of tune. Combined with the girls' warped harmonies, it's quite an effect.

Part of this record's appeal is in its Amateur Hour hilarity. I won't be playing it often. But it is an item of great curiosity value, an example of untutored innocents producing something naturally strange.

Richard Grabel

Waiting for a Miracle

Pic: Pennie Smith.

Smokey in the '80s: that smile looks right in place.

SMOKEY ROBINSON
Warm Thoughts
Where There's Smoke
(Motown)

IT'S ONE of the cruellest ironies of the current climate of blinkered fad-fetishism that such spurious conceits as 'young soul rebels' like Dexys Midnight Runners are accorded massive press coverage while 'Warm Thoughts', the latest album by soul's most important, poignant and stately innovator/elder — William "Smokey" Robinson — was granted only the curtest of critical appraisals.

The Tamla-Motown label found its twentieth anniversary coinciding head-on with the dictates of the 'mod revival', 2-Tone and the Dexy debacle and took advantage of it all via some decent vintage-product compilations and a handful of long-deleted re-released albums from the halcyon mid-'60s. However, while the hacks blithely trotted out the cliches about Motown's Detroit heydays, Tamla UK found its current product — excepting the Diana Ross / Chic collaboration and Stevie Wonder's 'Hotter Than July' — being given the cold shoulder of indifference.

In 1980, two important things happened to Smokey Robinson. On February 14th, he turned 40 whilst his current album 'Warm Thoughts' capitalised on the stray hit 'Cruisin' ' (from 'Thought's' immediate predecessor, '79's 'Where There's Smoke') by siring a couple of new hit singles and making positive inroads into the US album Top 30. On the aesthetic front-line, 'Warm Thoughts' was granted a stirring verbal bouquet from *Rolling Stone's* Dave Marsh, who penned an excellent critique of the record, successfully pairing off his very personal feelings of exultation at seeing Robinson return to the forefront of black music while also zeroing in on most of 'Warm Thoughts' real strengths. Marsh, however, viewed the 'Smoke' album preceding it as expendable — barring 'Cruising's' sleek sensual flow, which he viewed as "little more than a marvellous one-shot."

Although 'Warm Thoughts' is a far more fully-realised piece of work, 'Where There's Smoke' is in fact the real return-to-form that even diehard Smokey fans like myself had spent the best part of a decade waiting for. Robinson and the '70s were largely a star-crossed pairing and when the Miracles lost their mentor in 1972, both Robinson's career and talents were to take a swan-dive into a trough of niggling erraticism.

Album followed album on which maybe two or three pro-form efforts were doomed to hang in the dank precincts of what can only be diagnosed as ill-perceived nods towards 'contemporary trends'. Things got so grim by the mid-'70s that Robinson was forced to admit a painful artistic defeat; his own songs obviously weren't in sync with public tastes (always Motown's primary concern and, in the '60s, our subject's real forte) so 'the voice' had to tackle other people's idea of the suitable Smokey conceit. Just prior to 'Where There's Smoke', a lamentable double live album hit a new low for an already grievously demoralised artist(e).

All the more intriguing then, that 'Where There's Smoke' should prove to be the key work that was to find him finally in sync with both his muse and a wide audience. Dave Marsh made a vital observation when he noted that "he (Robinson) never adapted well to the changing trends of pop and soul — as few singers of his generation have. So it's not odd that Smokey couldn't cope with the permutation of soul music into disco, even though his greatest songs were always about love and dancing and their interrelationship amid a maze of masks and poses. Robinson's tunes were for dancing close, and, to him, love was a matter of romance before sexuality. For the man who sang 'I Gotta Dance To Keep From Crying' the hedonistic revelries of Donna Summer must have seemed virtually sacrilegious."

'Where There's Smoke' found its forte in Robinson's ability to finally achieve a successful synthesis between his style of sensual romanticism and the souffle-light contemporary soul / disco medium that dictates the playlists of US AM radio. The sound on the seven featured songs has obvious affiliations with that most heinious of genres — the 'hip' easy listening syndrome. Yet Robinson's formidable sense of craftsmanship always grants each tune and arrangement a real substance, a wonderfully vivid sense of 'structure'.

'It's A Good Night', the album opener, gets straight down to business. As on 'Tracks Of My Tears', Robinson's veteran guitarist Marvin Tarplin sets the dynamic into motion with one of his magnificent ultra-functional guitar riffs to usher in Robinson's teasingly sharp delivery, here showcasing the composer's talent for precise, wickedly effective word-play.

Robinson is, after all, the master of nuance in regard to both vocal delivery and composition, and 'Good Night', followed immediately by 'The Nearness Of You' (co-written with Stevie Wonder and easily the best piece of music the latter was involved in during his wretched sabbatical in the greenhouse) and the sombre, aching 'Hurts On You', make for the perfect heralding of Robinson's return to the pre-eminence he once held in '60s soul.

Side two is more streamlined, purloining an excellent rendition of Robinson's vintage 'Get Ready' and exiting with 'Cruisin',' the latter being a particularly exquisite example of Robinson addressing a particular well-heeled idiom — the interrelationship between cars and romance — but imbuing it with such sensual conviction and total commitment to the glory of love that the number has the same transcendental quality that the composer's Miracles-era classics always possessed.

If 'Where There's Smoke' was Smokey Robinson's return shot, built around his extraordinary talents as the *craftsman* of soul, 'Warm Thoughts' is the return of Robinson as 'the artist'. Not that I'd imagine he views his vocation in such terms, but fired by 'Cruisin's' success Robinson obviously felt moved to record a body of songs that, whilst they might lose some of the commercial immediacy of 'Smoke's' finest *tunes*, present us with a vividly mature portrait of one of popular music's key figures, now in middle-age but having lost nothing (talent-wise) with the passing of time.

Instead, Robinson on 'Warm Thoughts' seems more *believable* and certainly more sagacious than ever before. It's essential to recall that in his key '60s songs, *romance* was viewed in terms of being either an all-embracing experience or a brutal, degrading and demoralising experience — victory or defeat, with only the playful resolve of 'If You Can Want,' say, providing any middle ground. 'Warm Thoughts's' premier triumph is that Robinson's commitment towards the often fickle dictates of love is afforded a wiser perspective that still achieves the awesome power that the younger Robinson's essential naivety fuelled his songs with.

A key sentiment is uttered in the song 'Heavy On Pride' when Robinson, his voice aching with a poignant urgency, declares *"Never mind wasting time talking about who did who wrong."* The statement stands out even though it's enshrined within one of the finest dance songs Robinson's ever written. 'Pride' in fact marks the full fruition of the singer / composer's attempts to remain true to his traditional '60s soul standards whilst still acknowledging the music's contemporary dictates (check out the mating of the string section playing — pure vintage Motown — against that formidable mule-kicking disco bass drum sound on 'Pride').

'Let Me Be The Clock', one of several key tracks, is pure unadulterated '60s Motown in both form and lyric, with Robinson pulling off the extended lyrical metaphor — always his ace up the sleeve in the halcyon days of 'Choosey Beggar' and 'The Love I Saw In You Was Just A Mirage' — and completely knocking out the listener in the process.

Most of 'Warm Thoughts' other songs choose more sophisticated up-dates, modelled on the contemporary adult-orientated pop standards that habitually lead to the sickly-sweet nothings of the Doobie Brothers or Barbra Streisand. Yet Smokey Robinson is so obviously back with a vengeance, he single-handedly elevates this most dubious of genres into a sympathetic context for his musings on the romantic condition.

It's exactly as Dave Marsh noted; Robinson, having experienced the sobering detachment, cynicism and cheap gestures - in - place - of - real - values that the '70s 'Me-Decade' displayed, feels the need to return to his chosen credo — reaffirming the true value of love. To attain the compatability inherent in the romantic liaison is still not merely possible, but absolutely essential. This belief is fortified on 'Warm Thoughts', not by naive instinct, but by a fundamental moral justification that only time and experience can develop.

'Warm Thoughts', then, is one of those rare albums that reappraises the term 'soul music', proving that in the right hands the idiom is still alive and not a pose. Like Al Green's 'The Belle Album', 'Warm Thoughts' is destined to be viewed as a seminal work, an album of music that is spiritually and morally up-lifting on its own terms: transcendental music. Green's statement of spiritual salvation is overtly joyful whilst Robinson is more pensive, certainly, but the urgency barking up these records is *absolute*.

Compared to Smokey Robinson's current music, the 'young soul rebels' pose is an empty gesture too blinkered to have even a basic understanding of its aim. William "Smokey" Robinson at 40 years of age is not merely in full command of his creative faculties, his aim is truer than ever. Spread the word.

DEJA VU

Smokey in the '60s.

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TOUR NEWS

Pic: Bob Gruen

Springsteen's Wembley replays

In the wake of tremendous demand for tickets to the Bruce Springsteen Wembley Arena concerts on April 19 and 20, promoter Harvey Goldsmith has confirmed that the Asbury Park rocker will be playing three extra dates at the same venue, on April 2, 3 and 4. Punters who have already applied for tickets to the original concerts may now find that they will be offered seats for the extra dates, any remaining tickets being offered for sale by postal applications only, the address to contact being: GP Productions, P.O. Box 4TL, London W1A 4TL. Tickets are priced at £6.30 and £5.30 (including booking fee) and payment should be made by postal order, these being made payable to 'GP Productions'. An s.a.e. should also be enclosed.

But while the London gigs have proved a sell-out, some tickets for Springsteen's Birmingham International Arena concert on March 27 still remain unsold. These are priced at £5.80 and £5.30 and can also be obtained from GP Productions, though fans are advised to write either 'Wembley' or 'Birmingham' on the back of their forwarding envelopes.

☐ **STATUS QUO,** responding to the enormous demand for tickets for their Londong conerts in March, have added an extra date at the Hammersmith Odeon on March 12. Tickets for this additional show are priced at £5 and £6 and will be available by postal application only. Cheques and postal orders should be made out to Hammersmith Odeon and sent, along with details of requirements and an SAE, to The Odeon, Queen Caroline Street, Hammersmith, London W.6. Tickets are limited to six per applicant.

☐ **MAX WEBSTER,** the Canadian heavies, fly in later this month to play four gigs, appearing as headliners at Hammershith Odeon on January 22 and at Newcastle City Hall on January 23 (with Angelwitch as support at both concerts) before supporting Black Sabbath at Leeds Queens Hall on January 24 and at Stafford Bingley Hall on January 25. Phonogram are to release a new single 'Battle Scar', taken from the band's recently released 'Universal Juveniles' album, to coincide with the Canucks arrival in this country.

☐ **PYSYCHEDELIC FURS** play Nottingham's Rock City, a new 1,700 stand-up venue on January 27. This will be the band's sole provincial appearance before two dates at London's Marquee on January 28 and 29, after which they go into a studio to record an album for April release. A full U.K tour is expected to coincide with the album's release.

☐ **NASHVILLE TEENS,** who recently signed with Go Records, an independent label, play a number of London gigs this month, commencing at Fulham Greyhound on January 8, then appearing at Kingston Three Tuns (15), Fulham Golden Lion (28), Canning Town Bridge House (29) and Camden Dingwall's (30). The band who are still headed by original vocalist Ray Phillips, have a single, 'Midnight'/'Live For The Summer' out this week. Their first release in 10 years, they're dedicated it to their old boss, Don Arden.

☐ **DEDRINGER** are set to play the following dates: Leeds Fforde Green (January 22), Bristol Granary (24), Richmond Brolly's (25), Swindon Brunel Rooms (27), Exeter University (28), Walsal Town Hall (31), Doncaster Bircotts Leisure Centre (February 7), Bradford Princeville (12), Sunderland Mayfair (13), Paisley Bungalow Bar (14) and Leeds Fforde Green (15). The band, who featured on tours with the Michael Schenker Group and Triumph, have a new Dindisc single out this Friday (9). Titled 'Direct Line' it lends its name to the band's debut album which is set for release on January 23.

☐ **UFO** have added five extra dates to their forthcoming tour and now

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DATA CONTROL

Pic: Brian Aris

Rats at the Rainbow

The Boomtown Rats, who were to have played a London concert at Hammersmith Palais on January 18, have now switched the venue to the Finsbury Park Rainbow. Tickets for this gig are priced at £3.50, and punters who have already purchased tickets from the Palais box-office are advised to apply for a refund while those who bought tickets through an agency will have the choice of either obtaining a refund or indulging in a straight switch of tickets for the Rainbow gig. The promoters Staight Music, regretting the venue change, state: "We are sorry for any inconvenience caused to fans but every effort will be made to facilitate the change-over of venues. If anyone encounters a problem then he or she should immediately contact Straight Music on 01-351 3355."

An extra Rats date has now been added at Leeds Queens Hall on January 15. Tickets for this show are also priced at £3.50 and are available either from the Queen's Hall box-office, Barker's of Leeds or HMV Bradford.

Support band at all Boomtown Rats gigs has now been named as The Atrix, an Irish band whose last single 'Treasure on The Wasteland' appeared on the Double-D label a couple of months ago.

set to appear at Guildford Surrey University (January 13), Exeter University (14), Notthingham Rock City (15), Leeds University (17) and Lancaster University (23). The band's new album, 'The Wild, The Willing And The Innocent' is released by Chrysalis on January 16.

☐ **RICHARD DIGANCE** embarks on an 'Animal Alphabet' tour next month to celebrate the success of his recently published book, which has sparked off a forthcoming BBC Radio-2 series. The tour commences at Bridlington B's Theatre Bar on February 6 and then plays: New Biggin Sports Centre (10), Croydon Fairfield Hall (11), Horsham Capitol Theatre (11), Camberley Civic Hall (15), Wescliffe Cliffs Pavilion (15), Cambridge Guildhall (26), Newcastle University (27) Peterborough Key Theatre (March 1), Southport Theatre (7), Hull New Theatre (12), Tolworth Recreation Centre (27) and Southsea King's Theatre (31).

☐ **THE BLUES BAND** kick off their 1981 activities with two week British tour that opens at Guildford Civic Centre on January 22. Other dates : Canterbury Odeon (26), Birmingham Odeon (27), Brighton Top Rank (28), Oxford Polytechnic (30), Leeds University (31), Sheffield Top Rank (February 1), Manchester Rotters (2), Liverpool Rotters (3), Brandford University (4) and Coventry Polytechnic (5).

☐ **LINDISFARNE** follow up the 11 concert Xmas bonanza at Newcastle's City Hall with a marathon concert tour that encompasses the whole of January and February, with further dates to be added. The tour which features Charisma recording artists Trimmer and Jenkins as support act plays : Woolwich Tramshed (January 8), Putney Half Moon (9), Crystal Palace Hotel (10), London The Venue (11), Norwich East Anglia University (17), Poole Arts Centre (18), Reading University (20), Loughborough University (21), Manchester UMIST (22), Liverpool University (23), Bradford University (24), Crewe and Allsager College (26), Cardiff University (27), Cardiff Treforest Polytechnic (28), Swansea University (29), London Queen Mary's College (30), Plymouth Polytechnic (31), Ta unton Odeon (February 1), Leicester University (3), York University (4), Sunderland Polytechnic (5), Newcastle Polytechnic (6), Newcastle University (7), Leeds Opera House (8), Edinburgh Usher Hall (9), Nottingham Trent Polytechnic (10), Sheffield Polytechnic (11), Middlesborough Town (12), Dundee University (13), Strathclyde Univisity (14), Carlisle Market Hall (15), Ayr City Hall (16), Edinburgh St Andrew's University (17). The band go into the studios during March and April to record a new album.

RECORD NEWS

Pic: Pennie Smith

XTC Cartoon Capers

● An edited version of 'Sgt. Rock', from the band's 'Black Sea' album, will be the A side to the next XTC single, available on January 16. The B side is formed by a medley of 'Living Through Another Cuba'/'Generals and Majors', recorded live at a London Lyceum gig, last October. The single will be available in a special bag containing a double sided poster, one side featuring a strip cartoon, the other being devoted to what Virgin Records consider to be a spiffy portrait of the band.

● **The Clash** have a single, 'Hitsville U.K.'/'Radio One' out on CBS on January 16. Produced by Bill Price and The Clash, the disc will be available in a picture sleeve.

● Red Shadow Records have signed **Ronnie Spector** for release in the U.K. her first album for the label, 'Siren', being scheduled for release in February. The album, produced by Genya Ravan, features many New York new wave musicians including Cheetah Chrome of Dead Boys, Billy Rath of The Heartbreaks and Tommy Price of Mind De Ville.

● A **Desmond Dekker** single 'Many Rivers To Cross'/'Pickney Girl' gets a release on Stiff this week. The A side is a version of a Jimmy Cliff classic. Dekker is currently in a studio working with someone Stiff mysteriously list as 'a famous person' and an album should be available in the not too distant future.

● **Fist**, the hard-rock unit who play support on the up-and-coming UFO tour, have an MCA single 'Collision Course'/'Law Of The Jungle' released this Friday.

● U.S. Bluesman **Johnny Mars** has a London-recorded album, 'Mighty Mars', rush-released by JSP Records on January 23, to tie-in with the opening date of his European tour. Also released on the same day is 'Live In Florence 1969', an album by **Hound Dog Taylor**, the guitarist-vocalist who was such an influence on George Thorogood.

● Greatest Hits albums by **Bill Withers** and **Aerosmith** plus a 'Best Of' featuring **John McLaughlin** are planned for January 16 release by CBS.

● **Nazareth**, back to their original four-man format since the loss of guitarist Zal Cleminson have a single 'Dressed To Kill' released by NEMS during the first week in February. This will be followed by a new album titled 'Fool Circle'. McCafferty and Co. head out on U.S. tour in February and will add two extra members for these gigs, the additional band members being keyboardist John Locke (ex-Spirit) and guitarist Billy Rankin, who used to be with the Zal Band. Both new men will appear in the band's STV 'In Concert' show on January 30.

● **Alan Price** has his first album out on his own Key Records label this week. Titled 'Rock'n'Roll Night At The Royal Court', it features live versions of 15 rock'n'roll classics. A single 'Beat Out That Rhythm On A Drum'/'Geordie Medley' appears on January 16.

● **Steve Diggle** is shortly to release a four track solo EP called 'Fifty Years Of Comparative Wealth' which features members of Buzzcocks. Meanwhile, Paddy Garvey has been producing a Manchester band called **Night Visitors** who have been working on a single titled 'Night Visitors'.

● **Gordon Giltrap** has signed to PVK Records and has an album, 'The Peacock Party' in the shops on February 6. A concept job, the album is based on the best-selling book by Alan Aldridge.

IMPORTS

THERE IS a ruling in Canada that forces all radio stations to play at least 30% Canuck content records, and latest to benefit from what is known as the 'Cancon' principle are The Demics, whose self-named album is out on Intercan, and Zon, whose third album, 'I'm Worried About The Boys', finds them on a new label in Falcon.

Despite a recent claim by Zon vocalist Denton Young to the effect that he's now singing in raunchier style, the Toronto five-piece don't really come a great deal heavier than many of the teenybop outfits that frequent our own children's TV slots. It's probable that they were raised on early Guess Who albums and I guess that Young would be delighted to become the next Burton Cummings. But unless he and the other members of Zon fail to come up with more potent material than this, their ambition is unlikely to be realised.

The Demics, who hail from Ontario, are much more of a solid proposition. Though considered Cancon, they feature a Mancunian, Keith Whittaker, as lead vocalist and London-born Iain Atkinson on bass — which may in part account for the band's more British approach. Vaguely Clash-like in character, The Demics are currently running a while or two behind the times and have just reached the stage many of our home breed of new bands got to just after the initial crash and thrash punkwave blew itself out. They have a fair anthem in 'New York City' *("they tell me it's the place to be")*, which suddenly sounds more than a little naive in the light of Lennon's death, but generally, they too fail material-wise, the exception being '400 Blows', a jagged street chant that finally heads for glory with one of the most free-ranging keyboard ride-outs in recent times. A great possibility for singles-action, as they say in all the best trades.

● **The Easybeats**: 'Absolute Anthology 1965–1969' (Albert). The ultimate in Easys anthologies — a double album, compiled by admirable Glenn A. Baker, that contains no less than 43 tracks. And it's housed in nostalgia-packed sleeve that also contains a complete discography, an eight page biography and a fact file from the days when it was important to know that Johannes Jacob Hendrickus Vanderberg (Harry Vanda to you) rated chow mein as his fave food!

● **Bootsy**: 'Ultra Wave' (Warner Bros). More P-Funk looney toons from George Clinton's bass-playing sidekick. But that which amazed and amused in '76 won't exactly grab you by the goolies now.

● **The Secrets**: 'The Secrets' (Bomb). One of the week's best by a Canadian outfit (yes, another!) who proffer '80s oriented R&B but even find time to cut it on a slice of street corner acapella. Investigate forthwith.

● **Sonny Boy Williamson**: 'Sonny Boy Williamson' (Chess). One of batch of French-issued, Chess blues double-albums — there are others by Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, J. B. Lenoir and Little Walter — now being ferried into Britain by Swift Records. With only one Chess album currently available in this country ('Spotlight on Chuck Berry') such imports fill a yawning gap.

● **David Bowie**: 'El Rey Del Gay Power' (Deram). Even down in sunny Spain, they keep diggin' into the vaults to remind folk of the days when David Jones aped Tony Newley and made commercials for Lyons Ice Cream. Perhaps they hope to batter the Basques into submission through repeat playings of 'Laughing Gnome' or something! For sleeve collectors only.

● **Hollywood Fats Band**: 'Hollywood Fats Band' (PBR International). Bluesy fare from an L.A. five-piece headed by the guitar-totin' Fats and ex-Canned Heat and Mayall bassman Larry Taylor. But it's harpist / vocalist Al Blake who really gains my vote by performing Louis Jordan's horn intro to 'Caldonia' on his hootin' Hohner. A blue vinyl job that also contains a free Hollywood Fats comic.

IMPORTS TOP 10

1. **John Lennon and Yoko Ono** 'The Wedding Album' (Japanese Apple)
2. **Deep Purple** ..... 'New, Live and Rare' (Trash)
3. **Paul McCartney** 'The Paul McCartney Interview' (Columbia)
4. **Fuse 1** ..... Fuse 1 (Japanese CTI)
5. **MFSB** ..... Mysteries of The World (TSOP)
6. **Clash** ..... Black Market Clash (Epic)
7. **Whispers** ..... Imagination (Solar)
8. **Blondie**. Autoamerican (Japanese Chrysalis — contains free single of 'Call Me' in Spanish)
9. **Warren Zevon** ..... Stand In The Fire (Asylum)
10. **T. S. Monk** ..... House Of Music (Mirage)

Also selling: **Yellow Magic Orchestra** 'Solid State Survivor' (Sunburst), **Whitesnake** 'Snakebite' (Sunburst), **The Reddings** 'The Awakening' (I Believe In A Dream), **Millie Jackson** 'I Had To Say It' (Spring), **Native Sun** 'Live In New York' (JVC).

Chart supplied by Flyover of Hammersmith and The HMV Shop, Oxford Street.

John Peel's Festive Fifty

ANARCHY STILL RULES UK

It's number one! It's top of the pops!

Just to prove that old classics die hard, particularly in the midst of all the sentimentality of the festive season, the listeners of Radio One's John Peel Show have voted 'Anarchy In The UK' as the country's most popular single for the third year in succession, a full four years after it was first released — and pretty hastily withdrawn — on EMI.

The Pistols single polled twice as many votes as any other record in the adjacent chart, which was broadcast to Peeler's listeners during Christmas week.

The only band to dare challenge the Pistols supremacy were, unsurprisingly, Joy Division, who moved into the top three themselves for the first time with 'Atmosphere' and 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' in addition to being the top act overall with seven entries in the fifty.

Also showing well were The Clash with five tracks making the fifty and The Fall, Banshees and Stiff Little Fingers with four apiece.

In a refreshingly hard-edged chart, not quite as predictable as might have been expected, the biggest surprise is probably The Damned's 'New Rose' sneaking upwards for the second year running.

But the old guard of Peel's diehard listeners still keep the flag of trad rock flying: bubbling under at number 63 — still! — is 'Stairway To Heaven'.

1	1	Anarchy In The U.K.	Sex Pistols
—	2	Atmosphere	Joy Division
—	3	Love Will Tear Us Apart	Joy Division
4	4	Down In The Tube-Station	Jam
3	5	White Man In Hammersmith Palais	Clash
—	6	Holiday In Cambodia	Dead Kennedys
2	7	Teenage Kicks	Undertones
10	8	New Rose	Damned
6	9	Alternative Ulster	Stiff Little Fingers
—	10	Transmission	Joy Division
9	11	Public Image	Public Image Ltd
14	12	Holidays In The Sun	Sex Pistols
—	13	Going Underground	Jam
—	14	Decades	Joy Division
5	15	Complete Control	Clash
15	16	Johnny Was	Stiff Little Fingers
12	17	Get Over You	Undertones
—	18	A Forest	Cure
11	19	In A Rut	Ruts
—	20	New Dawn Fades	Joy Division
—	21	Totally Wired	Fall
—	22	She's Lost Control	Joy Division
16	23	Pretty Vacant	Sex Pistols
8	24	Suspect Device	Stiff Little Fingers
13	25	God Save The Queen	Sex Pistols
—	26	How I Wrote 'Elastic Man'	Fall
18	27	Wasted Life	Stiff Little Fingers
20	28	Another Girl, Another Planet	Only Ones
22	29	Love Song	Damned
—	30	Kings Of The Wild Frontier	Adam & The Ants
33	31	California Uber Alles	Dead Kennedys
7	32	Gangsters	Specials
—	33	Poptones	Public Image Ltd
—	34	Careering	Public Image Ltd
—	35	Requiem	Killing Joke
—	36	Psyche	Killing Joke
42	37	Jigsaw Feeling	Siouxsie/the Banshees
—	38	Fiery Jack	Fall
—	39	Armagideon Time	Clash
—	40	Where's Capt. Kirk?	Spizzenergi
—	41	Twenty Four Hours	Joy Division
—	42	Smash it up	Damned
—	43	Treason	The Teardrop Explodes
38	44	Switch	Siouxsie/The Banshees
35	45	Icon	Siouxsie/The Banshees
—	46	Bankrobber	Clash
48	47	Hong Kong Garden	Siouxsie/The Banshees
26	48	White Riot	Clash
40	49	Rowche Rumble	Fall
23	50	Damaged Goods	Gang Of Four

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DATA CONTROL

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

SLOWLY but surely, the gig circuit is stirring back into life after the post-Christmas hiatus. Already this week, we have 33 per cent more gigs than last week. And there are five new tours getting under way — plus, of course, **The Boomtown Rats** currently in mid-tour.

Roxy Music, who were forced to cancel a number of concerts last summer, begin a series of re-arranged gigs in Manchester on Tuesday and Wednesday. And pictured above, kicking Roxy's Bryan Ferry in the shins, is **Toyah Willcox** — who sets out on the road, with her new-look Toyah band, in Canterbury on Tuesday.

Heavy metal freaks will find **UFO** and Canadian band **April Wine** starting separate tours on Tuesday, in Guildford and Bradford respectively. American singer-writer **Harry Chapin** is doing the New Year rounds, highlighted by a London show on Sunday. And **The Specials** and **The Beat** are co-headlining a string of Irish gigs, beginning in Belfast on Wednesday.

THURSDAY

Birkenhead Hamilton Club: **Dick Smith Band**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **The Quads**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Sky Diver**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Overdrive**
Bradford Princeville Club: **Weapon**
Canterbury College of Art: **Blurt**
Carlisle Micks Club: **Wayward Skylabs / Wranglers**
Chatham Central Hotel: **Spitzbrook**
Chesterfield Fusion Club: **Conditionally Human**
Coventry Dog and Trumpet: **Sub Zero**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Pasadena Roof Orchestra**
Eastcote The Bottom Line: **Keef Hartley Band**
Glasgow Doune Castle: **Rhesus Negative**
Gosport John Peel: **Xena Zerox**
Greenock Victoria Carriage: **Jim Wilkie Band**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **The Chaps**
Ipswich Cinderella's: **Emergency Exit / Jan Kunk**
Kingston Three Tuns: **Visitor**
Leeds Wigs Wine Bar: **Spyder Blues Band**
Liverpool The Mayflower: **The Rivals**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Restaurant For Dogs**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Inner City Unit / Kid Cairo**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Telemacque**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Rio & The Robots**
London Finchley Torrington: **Dick Morrissey / Jim Mullen**
London Friern Barnet Orange Tree: **Young Jazz Big Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Nashville Teens / Nerve Centre**
London Fulham The Cock: **Old No. 7**
London Greenwich White Swan: **The Business**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Hotel: **The Outskirts / Motor Boys Motor / Big Table**
London Hampstead Giovanni's Club: **Spartacus**
London Hampstead Starlight Room: **New Yorkers**
London Harrow Road Windsor Castle: **Dave Ellis Band**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Knightsbridge Pizza on the Park: **Ike Isaacs Duo**
London Marquee Club: **The Lambrettas**
London N.W.2 Hogs Grunt: **Malc Murphy's Storeville Stompers**
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: **The Kraze**
London Richmond Snoopies: **The Transmitters**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Al Cohn & Son**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Hank Wangford Band**
London Victoria The Venue: **The Polecats**
London Walthamstow The Towers: **The Razzy Dazzy Spasm Band**
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Private Lives / The Escorts**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Lindisfarne**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Drug Squad**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Oxford Cape of Good Hope: **No Difference**
Portsmouth Cumberland Tavern: **The Skavengers**
Reading Target Club: **Between Pictures**
Sheffield Hallamshire Hotel: **Rentakild / Loss Of Head**
Stroud Stonehouse Crown & Anchor: **Emotion Pictures**
Swansea White Swan : **The Tunnel Runners**
Winchester Railway Inn: **The Outsiders**

FRIDAY

Bedford Horse & Groom: **C-Saim**
Bicester Nowhere Club: **Partizans**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Willy & The Poorboys**
Birmingham Cedar Ballroom: **Chelsea**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Blurt/De-Go-Tees**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Situation Critical**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Teuser**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **Weapon**
Cambridge Sawtry College: **The Rank Amateurs**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **Streetlite**
Dunoon Tor-Na-Dee Hotel: **Jim Wilkie Band**
Gravesend Prince of Wales: **Spitzbrook**
Hailsham Crown Hotel: **It's Immaterial/Green Berets**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Limelight**
Leeds Trinity & All Saints College: **Dale Hargreaves' Flamingos**
Leicester De Montford Hall: **The Boomtown Rats**
Lockerbie Town Hall: **Wayward Skylabs/Wranglers**
London Camden Royal Exchange: **7 Year Itch**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Gerry McAvoy Jam/The Aliens**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Modern Jazz**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Hank Wangford Band/P.P.B.**
London Fulham The Cock: **Jazz Sluts**
London Greenwich White Swan: **Kicks**
London Hampstead Starlight Room: **No Idea**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Levi Dexter & The Rip Cords**
London Kingsbury Bandwagon: **Dirty Tricks**
London Manor Park Three Rabbits: **Dave Ellis Band**
London Marquee Club: **Eddie & The Hot Rods**
London Mitcham Baths Hall: **Moral Support**
London N.W.2 Hogs Grunt: **Red Rage/West End Stompers**
London Peckham Walmer Castle: **Shadowfax**
London Plumstead Prince Rupert: **Avenue**
London Putney Half Moon: **Nickey Barclay & AFM**
London Ronnie Scott's Club: **Stigma**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Freddy Randall Quintet**
London Stockwell The Plough: **Southside**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Juice On The Loose**
London Victoria The Venue: **The Pretty Things/720**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Emotion Pictures**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **UK Decay/Erazorhead**
Manchester (Ashton) Spread Eagle: **Stalk**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Talon**
Oxford Pennyfarthing: **Metro Glider**
Reading University: **Between Pictures**
Shifnal Star Hotel: **Redwing**
Stockport Warren Bulkeley: **Al Cohn & Son**
Sunderland Mayfair Ballroom: **Budgie**
Wallasey Dale Inn: **Stun The Guards**
Woking The Cricketers: **The UBz**

SATURDAY

Annan Victoria Hall: **Wayward Skylabs / Wranglers**
Bicester Red Lion: **Chinatown**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Xpertz**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Handsome Beasts**
Birmingham Odeon: **Harry Chapin**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Mean Street Dealers**
Bristol Granary: **Weapon**
Bristol Green Rooms: **Steve Hooker & The Shakers**
Chesterfield Boythorpe Hotel: **The Union Blues Band**
Chorley Tatton Community Centre: **The Distractions / Dance Troop / The Bu-Boys**
Christchurch Jumpers Tavern: **The Blips**
Glasgow Dial Inn: **Jim Wilkie Band**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **Between Pictures**
Kingston The Grove: **Avenue**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Dale Hargreaves' Flamingos**
London Clapham Two Brewers: **Sad Among Strangers**
London Clapham 101 Club: **B.Film / The Attendants / Orson Blake**
London Crystal Palace Hotel: **Lindisfarne**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Kevin Coyne / Metro Glider**
London Fulham The Cock: **Chantousie**
London Hammersmith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime, free): **Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends**
London Hampstead Starlight Room: **Soul Distributors**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Pictures**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Lemons**
London Marquee Club: **Lionheart**
London N.W.2 Hogs Grunt: **Albert's Relatives/London Vintage Jazz Orchestra**
London Regent Park Cecil Sharp House: **Four's Company**
London Ronnie Scott's Club: **Stigma**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Johnny M & The Midnight Men**
London Stockwell Old Queen's Head: **The Papers**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London Victoria The Venue: **Georgie Fame & The Blue Flames**
London W.1. (Dean St.) Rock Store: **The Elgin Marbles**
Luton Drill Hall: **Misty In Roots**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **The Boomtown Rats**
Manchester Whitefield Masons Arms: **Whipps**
Nottingham Boat Club: **Limelight**
Retford Porterhouse: **Budgie**
Shifnal Star Hotel: **El Seven / The Sessions / The Substances**
Stoke Bridge Street Arts Centre: **Al Cohn & Son**
Wallasey Dale Inn: **Asylum**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**

SUNDAY

Bicester Red Lion: **Chinatown**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Otto's Bazaar**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Frenzy**
Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan: **Video**
Brighton Alhambra: **Daddy Yum Yum**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Burnley Bank Hall Club: **Rough Justice**
Folkestone Golden Arrow: **The Pulsaters**
Glenrothes Rothes Arms: **Jim Wilkie Band**
Hailsham Crown Hotel: **Nouveau A Go Go**
Hatfield The Stonehouse: **Dirty Tricks**
Hull Groucho's: **Alkatrazz**
Kettering Kings Arms (lunchtime): **Dave Johnson Jazz Band & Guests**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Windows**
Liverpool The Masonic: **Dick Smith Band**
London Acton Kings Head: **Metro Glider**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Brixton George Canning: **Southside**
London Chalk Farm Roundhouse: **Sam Rivers Trio**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles** (for three days)
London Clapham Two Brewers: **Red Rinse**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Cable Car / M.P.H.**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Back Door Man**
London Finchley Torrington: **Juice On The Loose**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Alternative Cabaret**
London Fulham The Cock: **The Works**
London Hackney The Queens: **Avenue**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Press Gang**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Soft Cell / Depeche Mode**
London N.W.2 Hogs Grunt: **The London Apaches**
London Putney Half Moon: **7 Year Itch**
London Richmond Brolleys: **Weapon**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Keith Nicholas**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Back To Back**
London Stratford Green Man (lunchtime): **The Funky B's**
London Tottenham Court Rd. Dominion Theatre: **Harry Chapin**
London Victoria The Venue: **Lindisfarne**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Kenny Ball Band**
London W.14 The Kensington: **Kicks**
Newcastle City Hall: **The Boomtown Rats**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Manitou**
Oldham Birch Hall Hotel: **Al Cohn & Son**
Poynton Folk Centre: **English Tapestry**
Tolworth Recreation Centre: **Acker Bilk Band**

MONDAY

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Mayday**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **The Thrillers**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **The Ramparts**
Birmingham Romeo & Juliet's: **Enigma**
Boston Folk Club: **Mathews Bros.**
Bristol Stonehouse: **React**
Croydon The Cartoon: **Pictures**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Ilford Room at the Top: **Georgie Fame & The Blue Flames**
Keighley Fun House: **Knife Edge**
Kingston The Grove: **Avenue**
Leeds Polytechnic: **Harry Chapin**
London City Polytechnic: **Frankie Miller Band**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Kan-Kan**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **The MGA Band**
London Fulham The Cock: **John Spencer's Spectacles**
London Hampstead Starlight Room: **Fizz**
London Islington Hare & Hounds: **7 Year Itch**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Mark Ryder**
London Kentish Town Bull & Gate: **Big Chief**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The Syndicate**
London N.W.2 Hogs Grunt: **TJ4**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Jam Today**
London Stratford Green Man : **Telemacque**
London Tooting The Castle: **Fruit Eating Bears/Empty Vessels**
London Walthamstow Saxon Club: **Shader**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Edukators**
London W.1 Gillray's Bar: **Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goolies**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Preston Pear Tree: **Whitefire**
Sheffield Byron Arms: **Active Gliders**
Sheffield The Penguin: **Alkatrazz**
Sheffield University: **The Amoebas**
Southend Zero 6: **Micky Jupp Band**
Wallasey Labour Club: **Windows**
Watford Bailey's: **Ritz** (for a week)
Worcester St. John's College: **Soul Direction**

TUESDAY

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Cromo**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **The Ramparts**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bradford St. George's Hall: **April Wine/Chevy**
Bristol Stonehouse: **The Baleeshas**
Canterbury Kent University: **Toyah**
Cromer West Runton Country Shack: **George Hamilton IV**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **The Boomtown Rats**
Gravesend Red Lion: **The Klones**
Guildford Surrey University: **UFO**
Leamington Spa The Crown: **Partizans**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Broadcast/Big Combo**
London Fulham Greyhound: **T.V. Smith's Explorers/The Imports**
London Fulham The Cock: **Side Street**
London Hampstead Starlight Room: **The Kids Next Door**
London Hornsey Kings Head: **Main Avenue Jazzband**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Shock**
London Knightsbridge Pizza on the Park: **Tony Lee & Guests**
London Marquee Club: **The Name**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The Razzy Dazzy Spasm Band**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Joe Newman/Bill Le Sage Trio**
London Southall Hamborough Tavern: **Vibrage/Herbal Flowers**
London Stockwell Old Queen's Head: **Harfoot Brothers**
London Victoria The Venue: **Bow Wow Wow**
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: **Frankie Miller Band**
London W.C.1. New Merlin's Cave: **The MGA Band**
Malvern Mount Pleasant: **Dangerous Girls**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Roxy Music**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Overdrive**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Chinatown**
Rishton Bay Horse New Inns: **Whitefire**
Southampton Concorde Club: **Al Cohn & Son**
Southampton Solent Suite: **Sam Rivers Trio**
Swindon Brunel Rooms: **The Elgin Marbles**
Swinton The Towpath: **The Amoebas**
York University: **Harry Chapin**

WEDNESDAY

Belfast Ulster Hall: **The Specials / The Beat**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Dansette Damage**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **M.S. Nightwork**
Birmingham Odeon: **April Wine / Chevy**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Ezra Pound**
Bletchley White Hart: **C-Saim**
Cardiff New Theatre: **Al Cohn & Son**
Cheltenham Plough Inn : **Roadsters**
Coventry Warwick University: **Sam Rivers Trio**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Labi Siffre**
Ediburgh Odeon: **The Boomtown Rats**
Ewell The Grapevine: **Avenue**
Exeter University: **UFO**
Guildford Surrey University: **Between Pictures**
Halifax Foggy's: **The Pin Ups**
Huddersfield Polytechnic: **Spider**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Katy Heath Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Geno Washington Band / Steve Hooker & The Shakers**
London Fulham The Cock: **Terminal Rescue**
London Hammersmith Clarendon Hotel: **Suttel Approach**
London Hampstead Starlight Room: **Fruit Eating Bears**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Outfit**
London Knightsbridge Pizza on the Park: **Tony Lee & Guests**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goolies**
London N.W.2 Hogs Grunt: **Niebla**
London Peckham Walmer Castle: **The Firm / The Elite**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Bill Skeat Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The MGA Band**
London Waterloo National Theatre Foyer: **The Cambridge Buskers**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Metro Glider**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Roxy Music**
Newcastle City Hall: **Harry Chapin**
New Romney The Seahorse: **Mister Meaner**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Fast Action**
Southampton Victory Club: **Chinatown**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
Wisbech Railway Bell: **George Hamilton IV**

THE SPECIALS in Ireland on Wednesday

UFO tour opens on Tuesday

Bom ba ba bom ba bom ba ba bom ba ba bom ba ba bom ba dang de dang dang de ding de dong ding blue moon . . .

Penny Reel pays tribute to The Marcels

L to r: Murray Kaufman (disc jockey), Cornelius Harp, Fred Johnson, Gene Bricker, Ronald Mundy, Richard Krauss and Stu Phillips (musical director of Colpix Records)

THE MARCELS' 'Blue Moon' is one of the great emotional experiences of my life.

Here I am, tuned in to the nascent days of 1961, scanning radio stations, a constant diet, Auntie by day, the Grand Duchy by night, of unpalatable pap. The demise of Duane Eddy, fallen from his high estate — and great is the fall thereof — with 'Pepe', a hit for Russ Conway as well; and Elvis Presley too, who having attained a zenith of mock operatic foolishness with 'Are You Lonesome Tonight' is now riding high with 'Wooden Heart', trite sentimentality and bad German to boot.

Okay, there are *some* bright spots! Ben E King and The Drifters, for instance, both turning in regular performances of masterful Superpop. The Everley Brothers scintillating on 'Walk Right Back', and newcomer Ulysses Samuel Bonds with one of the most exciting new sounds in a long while, "New Orleans'. MGM release a Jimmy Jones LP in this country, which I treasure, and Tottenham Hotspur are heading for the double. Super Spurs and Superpop, rare moments in these bored years of the Macmillan decline.

THE NEGLECTED period from 1959 to 1962, reviled by rock critics everywhere, is the era of Superpop.

Borrowing chiefly from the R&B vocal groups of the mid-50s, the bass voice introducing a theme, then intoning it beneath a soaring tenor lead; instilling a little rock'n'roll and mainstream/gospel R&B; encasing the whole in solid teen, these discs are superb. They deserve more than the curt dismissal given them by misrepresenting posterity, and I still maintain that 1961, in spite of its disastrous beginning, is the definitive year of modern pop.

Perhaps the most unique, certainly the most refreshing element of Superpop is its racial franchise. Blacks, whites, Italians, Puerto Ricans, even Spanish and Mexican kids, all are singing in similar vein. Never again are the ethnic groups to share such singular musical identity.

The Regents could easily be a group of blacks on 'Barbara Ann', and similarly the Len Barry led Cameo-Parkway hitmakers The Dovells with 'Save Me Baby' and 'Bristol Stomp'; but the former are Italians, and the latter hip, white college kids. Marv Johnson, a young negro, is as clean as any highschool spic on his hit recordings 'You Got What It Takes', 'Move Two Mountains' and 'Is A Bluebird Blue?'. Outside of fealty to all things teen, Superpop is without prejudice.

Simply, the artistes are pandering a slightly bowlderised version of the hip, virtually unknown music of their youth. An elder brother's record collection, perhaps, or the music they remember blaring out of black radio stations a few years back.

THE MARCELS are a multi-racial (three blacks, two whites) outfit from Pittsburgh, who form and disband several times — disagreeing over the arrangement of 'Blue Moon' as legend goes — before Stu Philips of the independent Colpix label picks up some tapes the group send him and hire them for a session.

An avid follower of *Cashbox* charts, courtesy of *New Record & Show Mirror,* I watch 'Blue Moon' climb the 100, the fastest-rising disc of all time; hear it briefly on Luxembourg's US Top Ten Show through a fog of faulty transmission, recognising the Rodgers-Hart standard newly-treated, and am at a loss to understand the excitement. Why does it break so spectacularly, I wonder.

It is released here on the Pye International label in February, 1961.

Dave Jacobs, his sly smile working overtime, spins *Juke Box Jury,* 'Blue Moon' comes up on the credits, and I lay there in pre-pubescent orgasm as a man named Richard F Knauss explains the universe: *"Bom ba ba bom ba bom ba ba bom ba ba bom ba ba bom ba dang de dang dang de ding de dong ding blue moon moon moon blue moon dit de dit de dit moon moon moon blue moon dit de dit de dit moon moon moon blue moon dit de dit de dit bom ba ba bom ba bom ba ba bom ba ba bom ba dang de dang dang de ding de dong ding blue moon,"* as the unfortunate Katie Boyle titters in nervous indignation and Pete Murray wisecracks gloomily; as even David Jacobs, a host of small intelligence and limited opinion, is vociferous in his condemnation. I buy the disc down Petticoat Lane the following day.

The rock-hating British music weeklies pan 'Blue Moon' unreservedly. *Record Mirror's* reviewer gives it a one star rating — very few records achieve this distinction, The Classics' brilliant 'Life Is But A Dream Sweetheart' being the only other to my knowledge — calling it the worst noise he ever hears. It is that good!

A number one in this country with 'Blue Moon', the group never repeat the first success, although they do record a whole series of Superpop spectaculars. I buy every one of their Pye issues: 'Blue Moon', 'Summertime', 'Heartaches', 'You Are My Sunshine'/'Find Another Fool', 'My Melancholy Baby', most of them reworkings of standards in the inimitable Marcels style, itself a pastiche of 50s group sound, in particular The Del-Vikings, The Clovers and The El Dorados. The group's 'Blue Moon' album, like the flips of their "standards", is in traditional vocal group style and includes 'Most Of All' (originally recorded by The Moonglows — 1954), 'I'll Be Forever Loving You' and 'A Fallen Tear' (The El Dorados — 1955 and 1956 respectively), Pee Wee Crayton's 'Peace Of Mind' and The Harptones' arrangement of 'Sunday Kind Of Love' — a 50s R&B classic. It also contains uptempo novelty items, 'Teeter Totter Love' and 'Sweet Was The Wine'.

But the group never carry this influence onto the top sides of their singles. The nearest they come to it is with 'Summertime', the follow-up to 'Blue Moon' and a further US hit. However, this is not as successful as is anticipated, mainly because of its gimmick-free rendition. Nevertheless, it is their best ever effort. 'Heartaches' — or 'Headaches' as my father retitles it — does marginally better than 'Summertime', 'You Are My Sunshine' bombing between whiles. Their next release 'My Melancholy Baby' begins with the 'Blue Moon' bass intonation, then Ronald Mundy enters saying *"ah nah, not dat thing again, le's do sumpn new."* So they wurp and wop and burp into the song. Messy and ugly, such gimmicks cannot last and the group have no more hits. They make a guest appearance in the movie *Twist Around The Clock,* singing 'Merry Twistmas', and their only other claim to fame is that a black Liverpudlian group The Chants record 'Sweet Was The Wine' note for note in 1965 and earn a small British hit.

Ronald Mundy, Fred Johnson, Richard F Knauss, Gene J Bricker and Cornelius Harp would still get together in the early 70s for the odd Ralph Nader rock'n'roll revival show. 'Blue Moon' is their legacy and millstone; a great pity as Cornelius Harp possesses one of the best voices in sweet, falsetto R&B. Come back The Marcels, all is forgiven.

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Burning Spear, jabba jabba heys! Pic Anton Corbijn.

HEY! MR AFRICAN POSTMAN LOOK AND SEE, IS THERE A LETTAH IN YO' BAG FOR ME?

Burning Spear

The Venue

I can remember literally crying with feeling at only one concert, and that was Burning Spear at the Rainbow in '78. That kind of high is hard to repeat, and indeed, though I haven't specifically avoided seeing the Spear burn in the intervening years, I gave a sigh of relief that I hadn't seen his recent Rainbow show that most (except Chris Salewicz, who reviewed for this paper in ecstasy that time-warped me right back to '78) said was a bit duff.

Thus, no expectations at The Venue before Christmas. Even now, into '81 like it or not, I can time-warp myself back a couple of weeks, and wish I could stretch out the few hours of Spear onstage to balm our urban existence. If that injection of heart was available on the National Health, the country would be a saner place.

Admittedly, Spear's output over the last six to seven years has a way of all sounding the same, and thus he cannot be regarded as one of those extended - the - frontiers - of - sound types, but if you want a slow-burning, chanting tide of passion, he's your man.

Spear's built up a band that, while not reaching Sly/Robbie standards, is solid enough to carry his dense vocal. One of the most crucial elements of his sound has always been the use of horns, and thankfully, Bobby Ellis and Herman Marquis, the two session veterans, are both on board. Their horns carry the right pungent sweet and sour tone;

The songs ranged from his oldest Studio One styles, like 'Foggy Road', to 'African Postman' and others of his last 'Hail H.I.M' album. As the evening progresses, it's absorbing to see Spear penetrate deeper and deeper into the music; alas, I was too ecstatic to take notes, but halfway through he hit a certain point beyond which he went clear, into those abstract ultra-scat realms that are a beyond-words babbling orgasm, or primal scream — just cast adrift on the rhythm, switch on your soul as automatic pilot, and the journey will be thrilling but you won't drown.

That's the most precious moment of seeing Spear in good form, the total connection of spirit and body. Personally, I've no plans to repatriate anywhere, and theoretically, Spear's established themes of black culture should mean little; but there's a universality of yearning in his songs that can bridge cultural moats, however wide.

Vivien Goldman

The Sweet

Lyceum

EVERY DOG has its day, but like a lot of dogs The Sweet are enjoying their second taste of the limelight.

Why people should want to pack out this monstrous Ballroom on a Sunday evening in London — it's not as if they live in a provincial outback where not much happens — to see a shipwrecked relic in action is well beyond me. It's not even the original Sweet with the ambivalent sexuality of Brian Connolly (remember when Bowie took a backseat because all the gentlemen preferred a blonde?) but the remaining trio tarted up and repackaged.

Perhaps the resurgence of Heavy Metal and the continuation of ramalama punk is understandable in all its despicable plebian baseness baiting, but the blatant exhumation of rotting carcasses like Slade, Nazareth, Gary Glitter and The Sweet is a lot more frightening. It's a sign of how quickly young people become stale and aged, rushing back to their teenage (pre-employment, pre-dole pre-disillusion days) for safety and consolation.

The same people would probably laugh at their parents harking after long forgotten 'B' movie stars but here they are only five years later desperately re-celebrating the transparent fantasies of their youth, ignoring change, How does it feel to be senile at 25?

When they happened in the mid '70s The Sweet were a half necessary development in British pop — a direct threat to the monolithic edifice of 'progressive' rock. They gloriously sent up its musical mores, its repulsive machismo and its ridiculous satanic struck imagery: Deep Purple painted up like a kid's colouring book, hilariously stretched and shammed by the songs of Chinn/Chapman.

The actual songs 'Ballroom Blitz', 'Hellraiser' and 'Blockbuster' were hardly essential but their importance lay in what they signified. With the glaring stupidity of their elders in the album market highlighted and demystified with tack and trash, they cleared a space for a more imaginative and relevant rock music.

The Sweet should have been a stepping stone, a short lived happening who, having fulfilled their function, disappeared and left it for fresher faces. Of course, things don't work out like that and it's ironic that since their decline Sweet have worked right back to where they were always coming from and they've now joined the self same club of heaving hard rock morons out of whom they once took the piss with almost surrealistic splendour. This is the ball at the end of their chain.

Two squat, frizz-haired jerks and a brawny drummer, who've been rested rather than restless, prove to be very tiresome. They've come back to deliver brutish, beefy boogie, an evening of retarded and repressive entertainment.

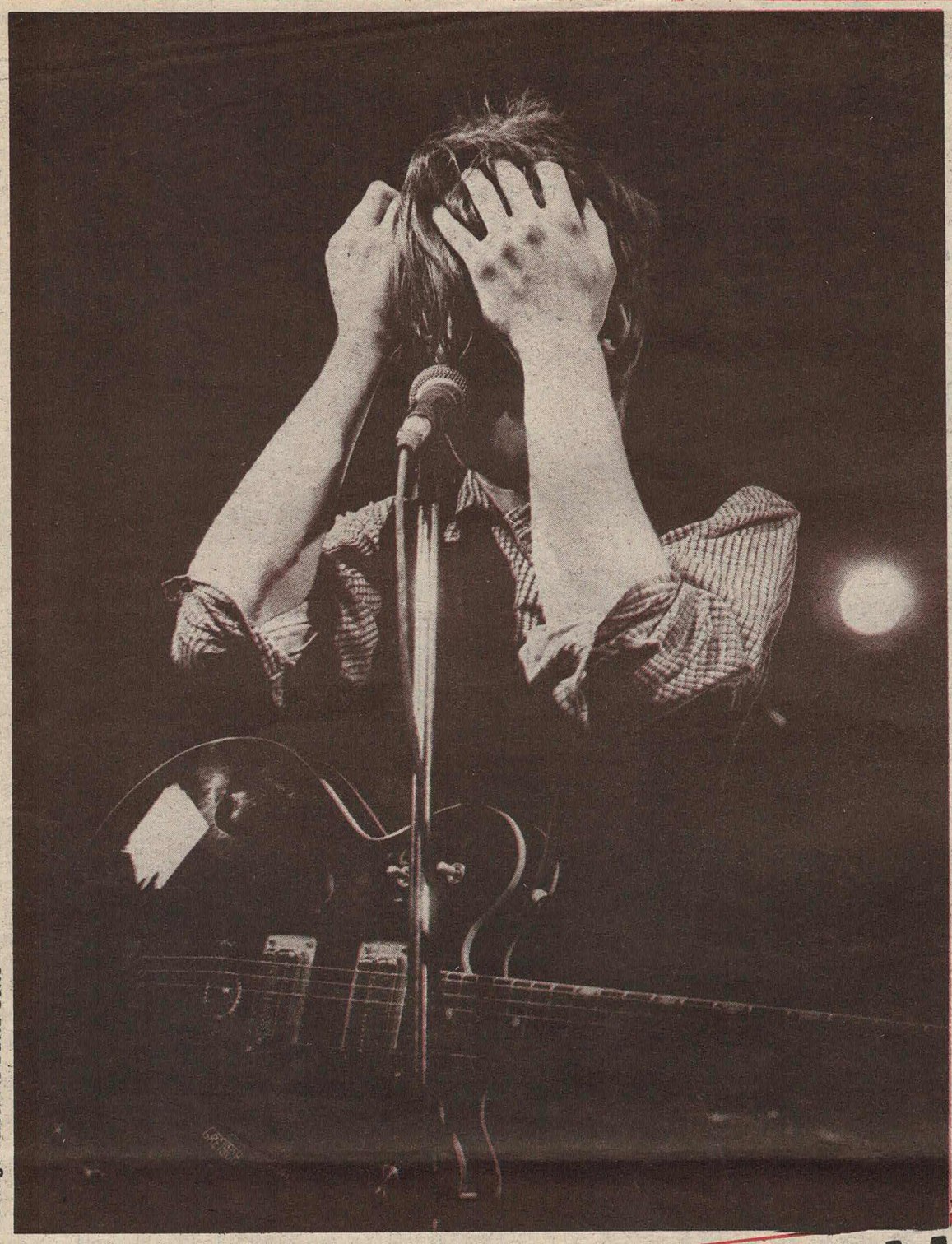
I was stunned into a coma of disbelief with the onslaught of aching bully boy sex *("She'll kill you with a wink of her twat!"/"If we don't fuck you, somebody will.")* and the meaningless archaic theatrics — guitar smashing, copulation with instruments and guitars set ablaze — until battered, exhausted and soul destroyed, the big gaping hole that's been blasted deep inside begs for relief and I submit to an early exit.

Steve Priest used to be OK with his one line Cruella Deville interjections, but what an embarrassing and obnoxious tart he's turned out to be in Connolly's spotlight — his vocals all browbeating yells and squalls, his attempts at dancing the cue for endless ripples of overweight flesh inside a tight leather jerkin. He leads the band through a mixture of old and new with a style that drives a wedge somewhere between punk and heavy metal.

The audience is so uninspired that the same sullen faces parade the bar regardless of who plays there. That's what's wrong with London's music scene; the venues attract people on the basis of traditional reputation and their fashion parade ambience: a place to see and be seen. The music has very little to do with it. A group like The Sweet can play the closed gig circuit without having to prove anything, which is just as well because they have nothing left to prove.

Gavin Martin

Priest. Pic Harry Papadopoulous



Orange Juice. Pic David Corio

HANG YOUR HEAD IN FAME

GOING UNDERGROUND AT YET ANOTHER ICA ROCK WEEK

A Reasonable Thing To Do

ANOTHER underground week at the ICA, slyly sponsored by London's limp, henpecking Capital Radio. Does all this activity have anything to do with the rest of the world? Cabaret Voltaire, Passage, Crispy Ambulance, Sound really shouldn't do these things: (but what else is there to do?): they should have a lot to do with the rest of the world.

Between Insight And Practice

Making a mark in the marketplace . . . making a name for themselves . . . Saturday's exercise provided a lot of what is the minimising, disdainful dark side of new age music: in praise of low life, sanctioning censorious hostility. Red Beat are Malicious Damage starlets, Basement 5 have lingered on tour with Killing Joke: I say this to clear the air, to air my conscience.

Red Beat's erect rock is a square, unhardened and more disciplined equivalent of their playmates' self-seeking designs: no doubt attractive to the irredeemable. Brutal and brutalising music, basic if not as delinquent as the Subs . . . my complaints about it are undoubtedly cowardly.

Basement 5 are four and rasp accursedly about sin and virtue, justice and temptation. Their sound is autistic, avaricious advancement on pure-ish punk, charging about but not much of a charge. They've a notoriously bad live reputation, and now I know why. It's retreat music: no extension, mundanely ungenerous. I'll leave it: I left:

There are two ways to dance to Basement 5: there is one way to dance to Red Beat. This way. That way. Away.

One good group on Saturday night and three great groups on Sunday night.

Smash That Mirror Into Smithereens

Dislocation Dance didn't want to depress us. Rock fans would call them lightweight and primitive, so they must be good. First on Saturday night, they were a breeze. Light clothes, fine haircuts, a way with words, their sound was a scatter-brand of chips, wedges, loops, leaps . . . a ferreting, fretting chamber/bop noise. Yet another animated and friendly adaption of Licked Decal rhythms, and a loosening feel that you might interpret as swing.

D.Dance (New Hormone recording stars) are riotously, comically derivative, a warm hearted trumpet edged blend that reminds me of the lost sophisticates Grow Up. Fussing fussy northern romance, hastiness, reckless wit, unashamed whimsy, lashes of soul and humour, dashes of coy sincerity and boyish enthusiasm, Beefheart and a spectacular sense of space. What a whirl! Hear how old fashioned they make XTC sound.

More more! An encore: a pouting, celebrative, underdone 'We Can Work It Out' that even in these tense conditions was refreshing, relaxing and all mine. Dislocation Dance should do a package tour with Orange Juice and The Bongos (each playing 20 minutes). Their casual clothes alone would be worth turning up for.

Fighting back

Here's Blue Orchids, a four piece with oblique style, pessimistic grace and factious discipline. Two stars from the very first Fall surface, presumably fulfilling their original intentions: unimpressed, impassive Una Baines joylessly fingering electric piano, melancholy Martin Bramah listlessly looking to be our first real guitar hero since Verlaine. What fun: buy you have to look and listen differently.

They're the kind of group The Subterraneans or The Only Ones would love to be: mournful, miserable, intense, shambolic, neglectful . . acting like they've truly connected with the essence and presence of Reed, Dylan, Verlaine, turning dejection into mighty art, the dismal into the compelling, separating the passion and the purpose from the myths, opposing the constricting, effects of slickness, technicality, rhyme and reason. It's a sound frayed at the edges and unafraid, dealing with reality and identity, the losing game, the lost cause. Their songs were so much more than a lick and a promise, were triumphantly monochrome, invariably fell to bits before the 'end'. The bass and drums were awful and always seemed to be playing another song. Bramah's voice — he was always destined to be frontman — whined and wheezed but unavoidably, pulling together inchoate chant-melodies. His guitar solos were chilling, his rhythm playing consummate. Baines licked the end of the little finger of her left hand and used her right hand to decorate this dislodging mix with leisurely droplets of sound/mourning sub'60s S.F. pleasure sound.

Blue Orchids have a classic sense of proportion.

A Ridiculous Relief

Pop is an art and there are all manner of elusive elements involved: it's not just a matter of knowing the words, the chords, the cliches, the history. Orange Juice — the little boys — understand. Their music is disordered, undeveloped uneven and majestic: pop for idealists, pop for imperfectionists. Imperfect pop! It's a cleansing experience. All these words are pretty useless: how can you write about a song like

CONTINUES PAGE 35

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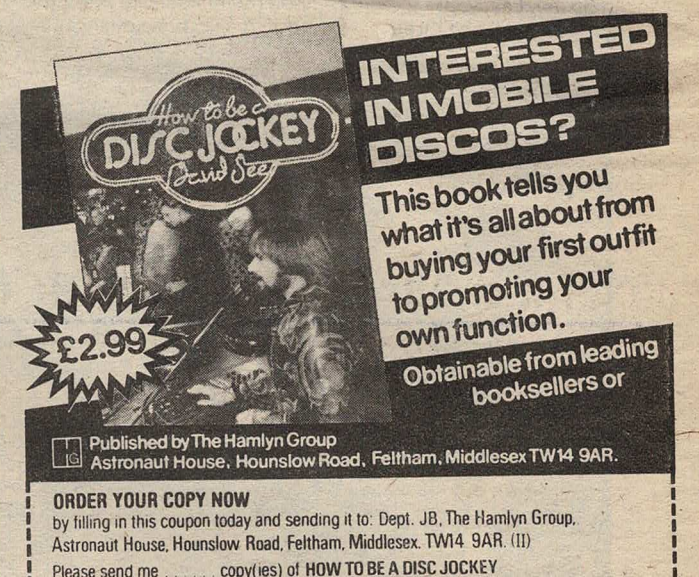
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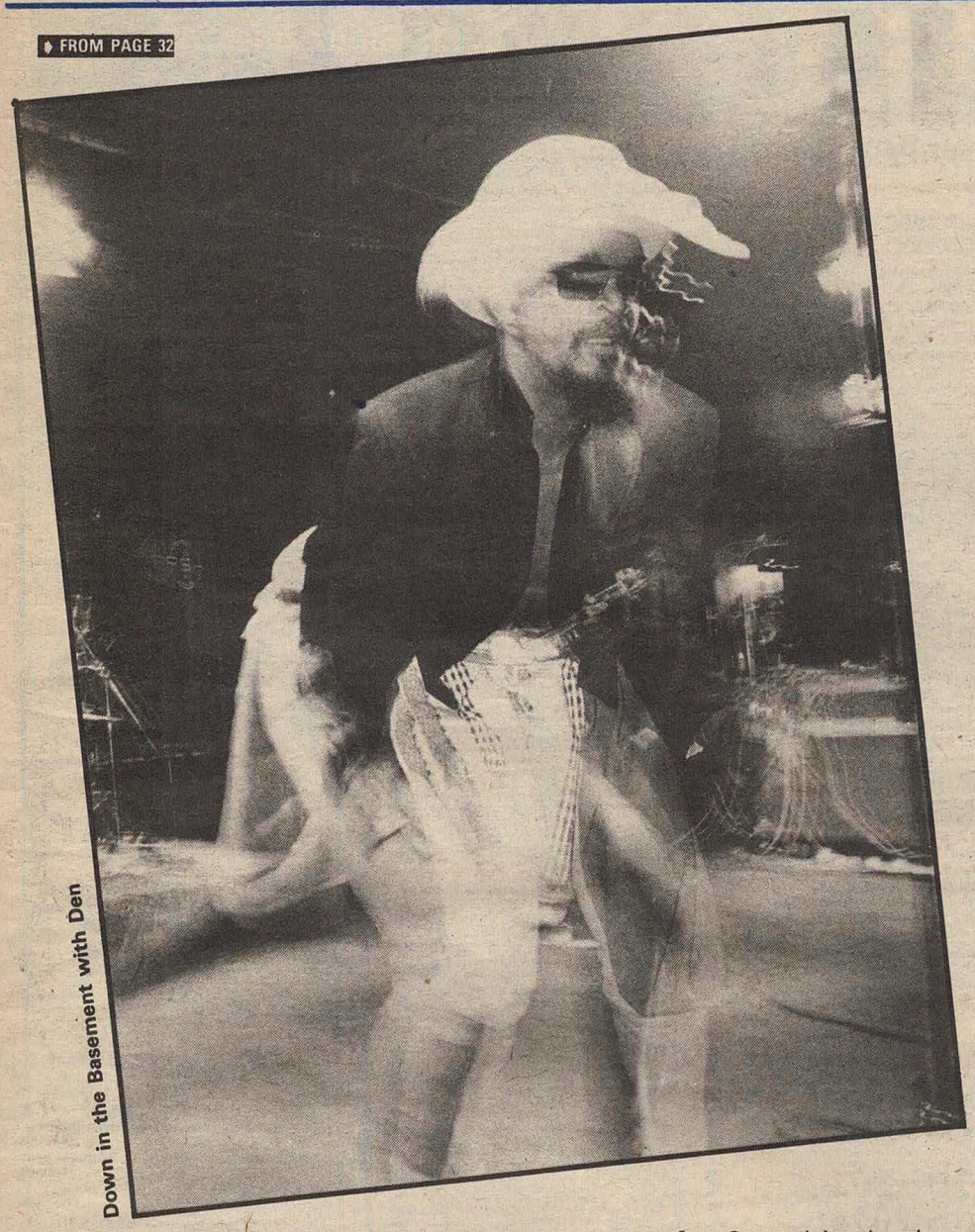

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The influence of The Velvet Underground in all this is, of course, inestimable.

O.Juice, fresh(er) from The Undertones tour, were last on the stage Sunday night, and looked divine. Last year Orange Juice released three singles: six special songs, an unyielding consistency. There's more to come. They haven't seized up yet: they're not careerists. Mood and edginess is still more important to them than smooth edges: their songs are, in orthodox terms, as scruffy as their hair cuts.

The one that they claim is "The One" will be the fourth in this magical run: it was going to be the third, but they lost their nerve — it takes a strange skill to properly translate their perversely elaborate pop songs, and they didn't feel ready enough last year. Now? If 'Upwards And Onwards' ("The One") and then their LP fails to impinge upon mass consciousness then Juice will split up. This terrible self-inflicted shadow hangs heavy over us: do something about it. Make a noise. Scream at the radio stations. Go Wild. Write loads of letters. If 'Upwards And Onwards isn't a hit I will a) kill myself b) resign c) sulk for weeks.

Orange juice played a moderate set and knew it. It was too long, too lazy and too polite . . . they kept apologising. I left as soon as they completed their last song: I love them too much to see if they encored.

Random Terror and Sexual Potency

A few fleeting smiles . . . A wonderful selection of shirts . . . Cheerfully shaped guitars . . . Some influence over their fate . . . The gradual withering of old emotional ties . . . The cool hits the fan . . .

Josef K are getting better all the time. Maybe they're now the best they're ever going to be. Sunday night they came on between Blue Orchids and Orange Juice and are the best group I've seen since Fire Engines who were the best group I'd seen since Joy Division who were the best group I'd seen since I was born. If Orange Juice are a radiant, ridiculous relief, then Josef K are a group for all hypochondriacs, adding fuel to the flame, putting a good face 'upon it', grinning and bearing, wondering stainlessly about motive and desire, wandering aimlessly through the human condition. What dignity. What a retaliation.

Josef K have style. They're worth watching. They're pop stars. A scant humouring smile stays permanently on singer Paul Haig's pink lips: his voice is lustfully ingratiating: he picks up a guitar half way through the set and throws in straying, sarcastic solos over Malc's intent discontent rhythm . . . A love-sick bass introduces an impertinent neo-funk strain. Josef K songs are intelligently fashioned, but not inflexible: they're sexy, shrewd, sharp, Magazine without the Formula or the science (by the way, imagine Barry Adamson with Donald Johnstone — what a machine). A veiled combination of absurdity, naivety, intimacy, resistance and grand scepticism. So much goes on, there's so much to go on. Enlightened go-go music.

Josef K didn't score.

The Fate Of The Hero

Blue Orchids, Josef K and Orange Juice: the best show I've seen all year. The influence of The Velvet Underground (and The Fall) in all this is, of course, inestimable.

Paul Morley

LIKE EVERYTHING that happens at the ICA, the rock week is harmless and hygenic; "Art" to be acknowledged, subsidised, and ignored. Far from being avant-garde, the ICA is an institution set up to put art in quarantine. Offical recognition of these peripheral and unenlightening events is equivalent to cordoning them off. The place turns into a cosy gay rights coffeehouse and we move on elsewhere.

This suits London's art students down to the ground. They are not interested in art, let alone political activism. The most radical thing they can bring themselves to do is change their hairstyles. Art has been replaced by subsidy; rebellion by grants.

What we need to shake up this stultified and otiose nation is not belligerent provincial art rock but a new and violent kind of theatre; the sensuality of delirious contempt; a second visitation of the surreal, an art that transforms, not one that merely refers. In matters of revolt, wrote Breton, none of us should need ancestors.

We won't get any of these things, because the English are a race of self-satisfied pigs. Instead we get The Passage telling us how proud they are to live in the "regions". Who cares *where* they live? Liverpool, Manchester, London. . . England is a dump from top to bottom.

What is the new music trying to tell us? Nobody is doing anything new, they're all just fencing themselves off from one another, getting their own little songs nicely organised, rejecting that influence, accepting this one. All of them so flustered over such futile matters, all so mean and prurient and self-important.

This particular evening's festivities commenced with Biting Tongues, who at least seemed to be attempting to make it a little newer. But their gratuitous and jejune film show — mainly of women with bananas, and other supposedly savage indictments of the consumer society — was uninteresting and unnecessary. "NOW PEEL YOUR ORANGE, IT REALLY HELPS YOU", ran one of the slogans on the screen. Such heavy-handed irony goes back to the primal scratchings of the underground cinema.

Crispy Ambulance were so uninspiring (and uninspired) that they do not deserve to waste any more of this space. Topping the bill were The Passage, whose sound is pitched somewhere between Bow Wow Wow and The B-52's. They feature keyboard bass, sharp drums and guitar, original use of the synthesizer, and a sulky, pouting girl singer with a voice like Cindy or Kate in The B-52's. Their songs were called, for example, 'The Shadows', 'Do The Bastinado', '2-7-11', 'Watching You Dance', and 'London', which goes at one point *"too many peacocks in one part/They must be very very dull in London."* Very enlightening. Their social perceptiveness is about as crude as that of Biting Tongues: 'Photo Romance' was sung from behind a copy of *Jackie*, and their preoccupations were about as limited and sterile.

"The avant-garde is the herald that comes before the fact," said Diana Vreeland, "but no-one is heralding anything today because they are too busy defining. Definition has got to go." I am using the words of the empress of fashion because perhaps London's precious art students will take more notice of them than mine. But maybe, in a climate where all any group seems able to do is refer to the codes and practices of other groups' definition is too much of a security to forfeit.

Confess it, you are waiting for more labels. Well, he who defines last defines longest.

Barney Hoskyns

Josef K. Both pix David Corio.

JOSEF K ● ORANGE JUICE ● THE PASSAGE ● CRISPY AMBULANCE ● BITING TONGUES ● DISLOCATION

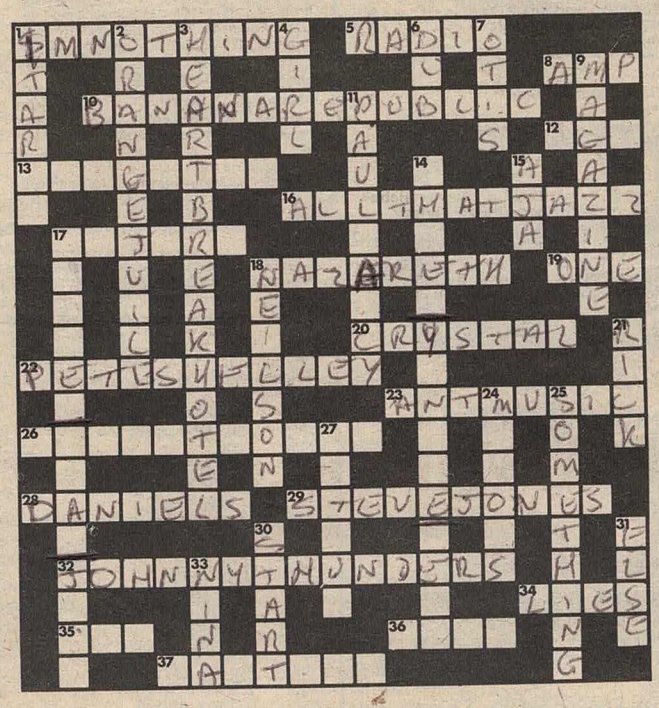
NME X-PRESS WORD

ACROSS

1 Aka 'The Apathy Song' 2, 7)
5 & 19 Warning: it can damage the brain
8 Pam used to make sound louder
10 1980 'comeback 'hit for Irish fruits (6, 8)
12 Steve Cropper and Duck Dunn's old band
13 Its working title was 'The Royal Academy Of Jack the lademy'
16 1980 movie starring Roy Scheider (3, 4, 4)
17 Joni Mitchell album
18 '70s Scottish rock band fronted by Dan 'Deep Froat' McCafferty
19 See 5
20 First name of US country-rock singer who sang on Dylan's 'Desire'; her own LPs include 'Elite Hotel'
22 Co-founder of Manchester's first name punk band (4, 7)
23 Adam's theme (3, 5)
26 Bob Dylan LP (6, 5)
28 Phil, Charlie or Jack?
29 Not Bodie or Doyle! (5, 5)
32 A blast (geddit?) from N.Y. Dolls' past (6, 8)
34 Like if you were to say Status Quo are the best band in the world, Francis Rossi has a hamster called Wally, 'Down Down' is the 20th Century's finest lyric, etc
35 See 27
36 U2 singer denies that he smells!
37 See 1 down.

DOWN

1 & 37 Lennon's last
2 Rogue Janice squeezed, shaken and reconstituted in fruity, liquid form (6,5)
3 Presley and The Jacksons have both booked in here (10,5)
4 Effeminate heavy rock band
6 Form of reggae
7 So it changed into a soul giant!
9 Howard's reading?
11 Leaguer with the lop-sided barnet (4,5)
14 Selecter hit (5,6,4)
15 Steely Dan LP
17 The long-range forecast for August? (6,4,4)
18 See 21
21 & 18 down Cheap Trickster
24 BL house band?
25 & 31 Cochran oldie Pistolled by Sid
27 & 35 Semi-legendary leader of '60s psychedelic combo Love
30 Jam hit
31 See 25
33 Hagen of the dodgy pose.



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

ACROSS: 4 '(Band On The) Run'; 6 The Slits; 8 Bad (Company); 9 Utopia; 12 Nico; 13 'Homeward Bound'; 14 Ace; 15 Eddy Grant; 16 Stax; 18 David Cassidy; 19 (John) Peel; 21 'Love Is The (Drug)'; 24 Green; 26 Dub; 28 Wasted Youth; 29 Joe (Tex); 30 Shangri-Las; 32 '(Band) On The (Run)'; 33 'Rabbit'; 34 '(Love Is The) Drug'; 35 (Joe) Tex.

DOWN: 1 The Mo-Dettes; 2 'Israel'; 3 Richard Carpenter; 5 UFO; 7 'Sunday Girl'; 8 'Band (On The Run)'; 10 Paula Yates; 11 Rose Royce; 17 Jilted (John); 20 'Lorraine'; 22 'On My Radio'; 23 Wings; 25 (Steve) Strange; 27 (Carla) Bley; 29 (Jilted) John; 31 Hair.

Photographs by Pennie Smith with passing comments by Joe Strummer, Mick Jones, Paul Simonon and Topper Headon.

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7" STRANGLERS Nice 'n sleazy (Jap1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" STRANGLERS Walk on by (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" STRANGLERS No more heroes (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" STRANGLERS Something better change (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" STRANGLERS Duchess (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" STRANGLERS Sometimes/Go Buddy go (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" STRANGLERS 5 mins/Out Tokyo/Death & Blood (Jap 1 etc.) (P) 2.75
ALSO AVAILABLE: 7" STRANGLERS Eastern Front (I) (P) 1.99
7" STRANGLERS Duchess/Raven (I) (Diff. P. to British) 1.25
12" STRANGLERS Bear cage/Who wants the world/Men in black/Bear cage (6.30)/Shah shah (5.22) (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 4.99
12" STRANGLESS Don't bring Harry/Svenge/Wired/Crabs (live)/In the shadows/Don't bring Harry (French) (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 4.99
L.P. STRANGLERS Iv (latest) 10 tracks (+ Free 7" o.p. with 'Choosey' 'Straighten out', 'European', 'White Room') (I) 4.99
L.P. NO WAVE (Various artists) (Including Stranglers' 'Bring on Nubies' & 'Nice 'n Sleazy (PICTURE DISC) (I) 5.99
7" STRANGLERS Don't bring Harry (in French) (I) (P) 1.50
L.P. STRANGLERS Xcerpts (Jap 1 + lyrs.) (+ free 7" of 'Choosey') 10.50*

MOTORHEAD MOTORHEAD MOTORHEAD

12" MOTORHEAD Ace of Spades (Christmas pic) 1.99
12" MOTORHEAD Beerdrinkers EP (Pink vinyl) (P) 1.99
12" MOTORHEAD Golden Years EP (P) 1.99
12" MOTORHEAD Golden Years (Diff P. to Brit.) (I). 3.49
7" MOTORHEAD Motorhead (Orange vinyl) (P) 1.25
7" MOT. Overkill; Lowie; No class; Bomber; G. Years; Ace; Beer; (all pic) each 1.10

ABBA ABBA ABBA ABBA ABBA ABBA ABBA

L.P. BJORN & BENNY 'Lycka' (I) 6.99
12" ABBA Chiquitita/Lovelight (I) (P) 3.99
12" ABBA Voulez vous/Angel eyes (I) (P) 3.99
12" ABBA Winner takes it all/Elsine (I) (P) 3.99
LP ABBA Gracias por la Musica (Jap 1 + lyrics) RED VINYL 10.50
7" ABBA Winner takes it all (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
ABBA VIDEO CASSETTE Abba music show 1. (Abba performing 7 of their hits) (VHS system) including postage £39.95
12" ABBA I have a dream/Take a chance on me (I) (P) 3.99
12" ABBA Voulez vous/Does your mother (I) (P) (Col vinyl) 3.99
This is a small selection from over 70 Abba goodies

VIDEO VIDEO VIDEO VIDEO VIDEO VIDEO VIDEO

Video film — Jaws 39.95
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Video film — Thin Lizzy In Concert 28.95
Video film — Status Quo Off The Road 26.95
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Boomtown Rats — Live 28.95
VHS or BETA SYSTEM post & good packaging (vital for videos) same as for albums

BLONDIE BLONDIE BLONDIE BLONDIE BLONDIE

7" BLONDIE Tide (I) (Diff. Pic to Brit & other imports) 1.99
12" BLONDIE The tide is high (long version) (I) (P) 2.99
7" BLONDIE The tide is high (Diff pic to Brit) (I) 1.25
LP BLONDIE Parallel lines (I) (PICTURE DISC) 15.00
BLONDIE VIDEO 'Eat to the beat' (VHS system) 29.95
7" BLONDIE Call me (Diff P. to Brit. + 12") (Jap 1 + lyrics) 2.75
12" BLONDIE Call me (Vocal + Inst.) (I) (different pic) 3.99
12" BLONDIE Atomic/Die young/Heroes (live) (P) 1.49
12" BLONDIE Heart (Voc. / Inst.) (P) (British Original) 3.50
12" BLONDIE Sunday girl (Eng. & Fr.)/I know (P) 1.99
7" NEW YORK BLONDES Little G.T.O. (I) (P) 1.99
7" BLONDIE Tide is high/Suzie/diff pic from all others) (Jap imp + lyrics) 2.75
This is a small selection of our large BLONDIE catalogue

12" ALLSORTS 12" ALLSORTS 12"

12" VISAGE Fade to grey (P) 1.99
12" BAD MANNERS Lorraine (E) + 2 (P) 1.99
12" HAZEL O'CONNOR Time/Suffragette City (P) 1.99
12" SPARKS When I'm with you (voc & inst) (I) (P) 3.49
12" SIOUXSIE & BANSHEES Israel (long version) 1.99
12" DEVO Whip It/Snowball/Gates of Steel (P) 1.99
12" BEAT Too nice to talk to (Beat design sleeve) 1.99
12" BASEMENT 5 'Dub' — Paranoia Claus/Work/Games + 2 (P) 2.45
12" BASEMENT 5 Last White Xmas + 3 ..... 1.99
12" BAUHAUS Telegram Sam/Crowds/Rosegarden Fun (P) 2.20
12" MARLEY I Shot Sheriff (live)/Redemption song (P) 1.99
12" QUEEN Another one bites/Dragon attack (I) (P) 3.99
12" ROBERT PALMER Looking for clues (E) + 2 ..... 1.99
12" ROD STEWART Passion (7.36) 1.99
12" JOY DIVISION Atmosphere (P) (+ FREE flexidisc) 1.99
12" JOY DIVISION Love will tear (Diff. P to 7") (+ flexidisc) 2.20
12" ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES Gods Gay (P) 1.99
12" LYNYRD SKYNYRD Freebird (9.08)/Sweet home + 1 (P) 1.99
12" SIMPLE MINDS I travel (6.13 remix) (P) 1.99
12" U2 40 Earth dies screaming/Dresma lie (E) (P) 1.99
12" MADNESS My girl (+ extra tack, not on 7") (P) 1.49
12" KRAFTWERK N. Lights/T. Europe/Model (luminous vinyl) (P) 2.50
12" HUMAN LEAGUE Empire state human (P) 2.25
12" SPECIALS To Much Too Young EP (I)(P) 2.99
12" U.S. 40 My Way of thinking (E)/Think it's gonna rain (E) (P) 1.99
12" DEEP PURPLE Black night/Strange kind (P) 1.99
12" QUEEN Crazy little thing called love/We will rock (I) (P) 3.99
12" E.L.O. Showdown/Roll over Beethoven (P) 1.99
12" E.L.O. Shine a little love (White vinyl) 1.99
12" ELVIS PRESLEY It's only Love (E) 1.99
12" BAD MANNERS Lip up Fatty (E) (P) 1.99
12" CLIFF RICHARD We don't talk anymore (6.45) (I).(P) 2.99
12" WINGS Goodnight tonight (7.35) (P). 1.99
12" IAN DURY Hit me with your rhythm stick 75p
This is a selection from our catalogue of over 2000 12"

GARY NUMAN/TUBEWAY ARMY/GARY NUMAN

L.P. G. NUMAN Telekon (I) (+ 7" I die in white or orange or green or blue or yellow vinyl — pic) ..... each 2.99
L.P. G. NUMAN Telekon (I) (L.P. in yellow, green or blue vinyl). each 4.99
7" G. NUMAN I dream of wires/Remind me to smile (I) 1.20
12" G. NUMAN Complex (British original) (P) 3.95
7" GARY NUMAN I dig you die (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" GARY NUMAN We are glass (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" G NUMAN Complex/Disconnect Bombers (Jap 1 + lyrics)(P) 2.75
7" GARY NUMAN Cars (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" T. ARMY Are friends/We are so fragile (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" T. ARMY Bombers/That's too bad (dbl single) (P) 1.60
7" T. ARMY Are friends/Down in the park (I) (P) 1.99
7" T. ARMY Are friends/You are in my vision (I) 1.20
7" GARY NUMAN Cars/Metal (I) 1.20
7" GARY NUMAN Sleep by windows/I die you die (I) 1.20
12" T. ARMY Are friends electric (I) (P) 2.99
12" GARY NUMAN Cars/Asylum (I) (P) 2.99
G NUMAN VIDEO Touring principle '79 (VHS) (or Beta) 29.95

GOODIES GOODIES GOODIES GOODIES

LP B MANILOW Hits (2 recs)/2 pic discs) 9.95
7" Adam & Ants — Young Parisians (Ltd Pic) 1.15
7" Pistols Pack (inc Black Leather/Here We Go Again)(6 recs all in pics, in wallet) ..... 5.99 (+£1 p&p)
LP. McCartney Interview with (I) 5.25
7" KATE BUSH Babooshka (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" KATE BUSH Wow / Symphony (+ lyrics on pic) (I) 1.99
7" IAN DURY In Betweenies + 2 (I) (P) 1.75
LP RUSH Hemispheres (PIC DISC) (I) 4.99
LP GROUCHO MARX Evening with (PIC DISC) (I) 5.99
LP KRIS KRISTOFFERSON / RITA COOLIDGE (PIC DISC) (I) 5.99
7" MOTELS Days are O.K. (PIC DISC) 1.99
7" MADNESS One step beyond (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
LP BEATLES 20 Hits (Arcade label) (I) 4.99
12" B. HOLLY — P Sue / Brown eyed / Oh Boy / Maybe (PIC DISC) (7) 9.99
12" BUDDY HOLLY Reve on/Ollie Vee/That'll/Gonna love (Pic Disc, I) 9.99
L.P. BEATLES Songs / Pictures of (VeeJay label) (I) 4.99
6" JONA LEWIE Big shot (P) 80p
7" QUEEN Need your loving tonight/Rocket (I) 1.20
L.P. SKIDS Absolute game (+ free L.P.) 4.99
BOW WOW WOW CASSETTE C20. C60. C90 go (+ 45p P&P) 1.15
BOW WOW WOW CASSETTE (Lim. Edit. 8 tracks) (Flip top pack) 1.99
L.P. BEATLES Rarities (Diff. recordings of well known tracks. Contains rare pics + Butchers' shot. Gatefold sleeve) (I) 5.49
7" DICKIES Gigantor (Yellow) (P); Nights (White) (P); Fan mail (Red + wraparound poster) (P) ..... each 1.15
7" KATE BUSH Heavy people/Man with child; Symphony in blue, W. heights; Breathing (all Jap imp + lyrics on pic) ..... each 2.75
7" GENESIS Turn it on again (Colour Pic) (I) 1.99
7" SKIDS Goodbye civilien (Pic Disc) 1.99
7" E. COSTELLO New Amsterdam e.p. (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
L.P. KATE BUSH Never forever (+ insert with Jap lyrics) (Jap I) 9.99
L.P. TOURIST Luminous basement (+ Ltd. 7" in Luminous v.) 3.99
7" GEORGE HARRISON Faster (Pic Disc) 1.99

METAL METAL METAL METAL METAL METAL

7" AC/DC You Shook Me (Jap 1 + lyrics) (P) 2.75
L.P. KILLER WATTS (2 Recs. Various artists) ..... Only 3.49
12" BLACK SABBATH Die young (4.33) (P) 1.99
12" AC/DC R&R Ain't noise pollution (P) (+ Free badge) 1.15

7" JUDAS PRIEST Exciter/Dissident 'Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" BLACK SABBATH Neon knights (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" AC/DC Highway; R&R; Touch; Whole lot (Jap I + lyrs, P) ..... each 2.75
12" SAXON Long arm of the law (P) (+ Free patch) 1.99
7" SAXON Long arm of the law (P) (+ Free patch) 1.99
12" IRON MAIDEN Women in uniform/Invasion/Phantom (P) 1.99
7" VARDIS Too many people + FREE 7" 'Blue rock' (P) 1.25
LP WHITESNAKE Live at Hammersmith (Jap I + lyrics) 6.50
LP JUDAS PRIEST Best of (PICTURE DISC) 4.99
12" SAXON 747/Stallions (P) 1.15
12" JUDAS PRIEST Living after midnight + 2 (P) 1.15
7" THIN LIZZY Killer + 3 (dble single) (P) 1.15
12" AC/DC T. Too much/Live wire/Shot down (12.26 total) (I) (P) 2.99
7" AC/DC Girls got rhythm/Pff you want blood/Hell ain't/R & Roll damnation (rare gatefold pic) 1.15
12" M.SCHENKER Cry for nation/A & Ready (live) + 1 (P) 2.50
7" WHITESNAKE Sweet talker/Ain't gonna cry no more (I) 1.99
7" M. SCHENKER Cry for the nation (Clear vinyl) (P) 1.20
7" U.F.O. Couldn't get it right (Clear vinyl) 1.25

12" TOP DISCO 12"

12" ARETHA FRANKLIN What a fool believes (E) (P) 1.99
12" BLACK SLATE Boom boom (E) 1.99
12" EDDY GRANT Do you feel my love (E) 1.99
12" DIANA ROSS I'm coming out (E) 1.99
12" LINX You're lying/Remix of you're lying 1.99
12" STEPHANIE MILLS Never had love like this before (E) 1.99
12" RAH BAND Falcon (E) 1.99
12" YOUNG & CO I Like What (7 mins) 1.99
12" BLACK SLATE Amigo (E) 1.99
12" OTTOWAN D.i.s.c.o. (E) 1.99
12" COFFEE Casanova (E) (P) 1.99
12" KOOL & GANG Celebration (E) (P) 1.99
12" F. SMITH Double Dutch bus (E) 1.99
12" GAP BAND Burn rubber on me (5.30) (P) 1.99
12" YARBOROUGH & PEOPLES Don't stop music (7.49) 1.99
12" ODYSSEY Hang together (E) 1.99

JAPAN JAPAN JAPAN

7" JAPAN Second that emotion/European son (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAPAN Life in Tokyo/Part 2 (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAPAN Quiet life/Halloween (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAPAN Sometimes I feel/Love infect. (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAPAN Unconventional/Lovers on mars (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAPAN Second that emotion (Red vinyl) (P) 1.25
7" JAPAN Gentlemen take polaroids (dble 7") (Gateford pic) 1.25
12" JAPAN 2nd that: emotion/European son (remix)/Life in Tokyo / Stateline / Adolescent sex (re-corded) (I) (P) 3.99
12" JAPAN (Live in Japan) Deviation/Obscure alternatives (6.05) / In vogue (6.10) / Sometimes I feel low (I) (P) 3.49
7" JAPAN Life in Tokyo (Red vinyl) (P) 1.99

JAM JAM JAM JAM JAM JAM JAM JAM

LP JAM Setting sons, Mod cons, In the city, Mod. world (All Jap I. superior pressings + lyrics. Back in stock due todemand) ..... each 9.99
7" JAM Start (Jap I + lyrics) (Diff. P to Brit) 2.75
7" JAM Set's kids/Heatwave (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAM Eton rifles (Jap I + lyrics) (Diff. P to Brit.) 2.75
7" JAM Going underground (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAM David Watts (Jap I + lyrics) (P) 2.75
7" JAM Sets kids/Heatwave (I) 1.25

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THE JAM First biography + lots of photos 3.95
THE CLASH Before & After 4.50
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ROCK STARS in their underpants 4.95
ROCK YEARBOOK 1981 (256 pages, 600 photos) 5.95
ROLLING

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40 MILL ST., STAFFORD
(NEON)

NEW U.K. ALBUMS

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Bauhaus — In The Flat Field 3.99
Associates — Affectionate Punch ..... only 2.99
The Fall — Grotesque/Dragnet/With Trials ..... each 3.99
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U2 — Boy 3.99
Public Image — Live in Paris 4.49
Fashion — Product Perfect (very underrated Band) 3.99
Robert Rental & The Normal — Live at West Runton Pavilion 2.25
Prag Vec — No Cowboys 3.99
Echo & The Bunnymen — Crocodiles + Ltd Ed Free Single 3.99
Second City Static — v/Artists. Scottish new wave comp 2.50
Toyah — Toyah, Toyah, Toyah (new Live Album) 3.99
Mo-dettes — Story So Far 3.99
Hybrid Kids — Claws (Bizarre) 3.99
Miniatures — v/Art inc XTC, Damned, Fripp, Residents etc 3.99
The Mekons — Mekons (new 2nd Album) 3.99
Polystyrene — Translucence 3.99
Modernaires — Way of Living (excellent debut LP) £3.75
Modern Man — Concrete Scheme (Prod. Midge Ure) 3.99
Cravats — In Toyland 3.99
Ada Wilson Band — Tatto Hosts Vision On £3.99
Joy Division — Unknown Pleasures/Closer ..... each 3.99
Lemon Kittens — We Buy A Hammer for Daddy 3.99
The Sound — Jeopardy 3.99
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Colin Newman (Wire) A-Z (Harsh) 3.99
Lewis & Gilbert — 3R4 ..... 3.75
Dead Kennedys — Rotting Fruit 3.99
Young Marble Giants — Colossal Youth 3.99
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Creation Rebel — Starship Africa (Heavy Heavy Dub) 3.99
Glaxo Babies — Put Me On The Guest List (live) ..... only 2.95
Ultravox — Vienna/Systems Of Romance/Ha Ha! ... each 3.99
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Hazel O'Connor — Sons & Lovers (2nd LP) 3.75

NEW SINGLES

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Buzz & The Flyers — Go Cat Wild (Wild, rough sound-pic) ..95
Delta Five — Try (3rd Excellent 45 — Pic) 99
Au-Pairs — It's Obvious (pic) 95
The Slits — Animal Space (pic) 95
The Prats — Die Todten Reyten Schnell (German import — Pic) 1.25
Go-Betweens — I Need Two Heads (Superb, Powerful 45) .. 99
Material — Discourse (Pic) 99
DB's (Chris Stamey) — Dynamite (Pic) 99
Tuxedo Moon — Dark Companion (Pic) 99
Diagram Bros — We Are All Animals (Great Vinyl Debut — Pic) 95
Gods Toys — All The Born Losers 99
Girls At Our Best — Pelotics/Getting Nowhere Fast (both Pic) ..... each 99
Modern Eon — Euthenics (Inev. — Pic) 99
Dead Kennedys — California/Cambodia/Kill The Poor (All Pic) ..... each 99
Sector 27 — Total Recall (3rd 45 — Pic) 99
Birthday Party — Mr Clarinet/Friend Catcher (2 Classic 45's — Both Pic) ..... each 99
Blue Orchids — Disney Boys (Pic) 99
The Fall — Elastic Man/Rowche Rumble/Totally Wired (All Pic) ..... each 99
Manufactured Romance — Time Of My Life (Pic) 99
Wahl Heat — 7 Minutes To Midnight/Bettef Scream (Both Pic) ..... each 99
U2 — Out Of Control 3 Track EP (Irish Only Release — Pic) 1.95
U2 — 11 O'Clock/I Will Follow/Another Day Without Me (All Pic) ..... each 99
New Age Steppers — Fade Away (The Slits & Friends) (Pic) 99
Ludus — My Cherry Is in Sherry (Pic) 99
Section 25 — Channel Ground (Import — Pic Prod Hannett) 1.25
Crispy Ambulance — From The Cradle To The Grave (Pic).. 99
David Bowie — Scary Monsters (Pic) 1.05
Misty — Zapatta (newie) 99
Jane Kennaway — IOU (Pic) 99
Killing Joke — Nervous System/Requiem / Wardance (All pic) ..... each 99
Thompson Twins — She's In Love With Mystery (Pic) 99
The Colonel (XTC) — Too Many Cooks (Pic) 1.05
The Freshies — I'm In Love With The Girl (Pic) 99
Michael Moorcocks Deep Fix — Starcruiser (Pic) 95
A Popular History Of Signs — Justice Not Vengeance (Pic). 95
Cabaret Voltaire — Seconds Too Late (Pic) 99
Ski Patrol — Agent Orange (Brilliant! — Pic) 99
Sisters Of Mercy — The Damage Done (Pic) 99
Mystere Five — Never Say Thank You (Pic) 95
Holly — Hobo Joe (new on Eric's — Pic) 99
Tiger Lily (pre Ultravox) — J Foxx on vocals) Monkey Jive (Pic) 95
TV Smith's Explorers — Tommahawk Cruise (ex. Adverts — Pic) 99
Orange Juice — Simply Thrilled Honey / Love Sick (2 superb 45's) ..... each 99
They Must be Russians — Don't Try To Cure Yourself (superb Pic) 95
Systems — Scenery (Pic) 99
Artery — The Slide + Free Live EP (Pic) 99
TV 21 — Ambition (superb Hard Pop — Pic) 99
Adam & The Ants — Xerox/Car Trouble (both Pic) ..... each 99
Adam & The Ants — Young Parisians (1st 1978 45) 99
Throbbing Gristle — Adrenalin/Sub-Human (both Pic) ..... each 99
Gist (YMG) — Is This Love (Pic) 99
Dangerous Girls — Man In The Glass (Pic) 99
Essential Bop — Eloquent Sounds EP (superb debut — Pic) 99
Josef K — It's Kinda Funny (Ace 45 — Pic) 99
Cathy La Creme — I Married A Cult Figure (JCC Tribute) 99
Frantic Elevators — Know What You Told Me (Erics — Pic). 99
The Stiffs — Volume Control (Pic) 1.05
Presidents Men — Out In The Open EP (Pic) 99
Drinking Electricity — Cruising Missiles (Pic) 95
League Of Gentlemen — Heptaparapatshinokh (Fripp & Mates) 1.05
Dumb Blondes — Strange Love (Pic Fresh) 95
Bow Wow Wow — 8 Tracks only on Cassette ....1.99 + 65 P&P
The Spectres — Stories (Tremendous Pop 45 — Pic) 99
Filmcraz — What Becomes Of The Broken Hearted (Pic) 99
Honey Bane — Guilty/Dub (Pic) 99
Robert Rental — Double Heart (Pic) 99
Classix Nouveaux — Little Green Men/Robots Dance (Both Pic) ..... each 99
Virgin Prunes — 20 Tens and Revenge (Pic) 95
Fire Engines — Everything Roses (Pic) 95

IMPORT SINGLES

Fred Frith — Dancing In The Street (Ralph — Pic) 1.35
The dB's — Black & White (N. York's Shake Records — Pic) 1.35
Gary Numan — I Dream Of Wires (New US Imp) 1.35
Lenny Kaye (Patti Smith Band) — Child Bride (Pic) 1.35
Snakefinger — Man In The Dark Sedan (Ralph — Pic) 1.35
Stranglers — Duchess/Raven (US Imp — Good Unusual Pic) 1.50
Der Plan — Da Vorne Steht Ne Ampel (Newie — German — Pic) 1.35
Der Plan — Gogo Girl (1st rare 3 track Private Pressing — Pic) 1.35
Art Bears—Rats & Monkeys (Ralph—Pic) 1.35
The Doors — Australian 4 Track EP (Good Pic Sleeve) £2.50
Lou Reed — 4 Track Aussie EP Inc S Jane/Vicious/+2 (Pic) 2.50
Minny Pops — Live In Amsterdam EP (Pic) 99
Faust — Extracts Party 3 (Classic Period Stuff!) (Pic) 1.35
Faust — Extracts Party 2 (Harsh — Classic Stuff — Pic) 1.35
MX 80 Sound — O Type/Someday You'll Be King (both Pic) ..... each 1.35

12" OF HEAVEN (mostly Ltd Editions)

Simple Minds — I Travel + 2 Tracks (re-mix) (Pic) 1.99
Clash — 10" Black Market Clash 9 Tracks (Pic) 3.49
Visage — Fade To Grey (Pic) 1.99
Bollock Bros — Bunker (Prod John Lydon — Pic) 1.99
Siouxsie & The Banshees — Israel 1.75
Basement Five — In Dub (5 Burning Cuts. Prod Martin Hannet — Pic) 2.50
Genesis — Spot The Pigeon 3 Tracker (Pic) 3.50
Brian Brain (ex P.I.L.) — Cultures 4 Tracker (Pic) 1.99
Pink Military — Blood & Lipstick (1979 Material — Pic) 1.99
Bob Marley — Redemption Song/I Shot The Sheriff (live) (Pic) 1.99
Misty — See Them Ah Come Jah (Pic) 1.50
Gang Of Four — US imp Send In The Army + 3 (Pic) 2.99
Devo — Whip It/Snowball/Gates of Steel (Pic) 1.99
The Beat — Too Nice To Talk To (Pic) 1.99
David Bowie — Ashes To Ashes (full version, Remix — good Pic) 2.99
Ian Dury — Supermans Big Sister/Fucking Ada 1.50
Nina Hagen — My Way + 2 German Imp (Hairy Pic) 2.99
Boots For Dancing — Boots For Dancing (Pop Aural) 1.50
Earcom 2 — v/Art. Inc 2 rare non LP Joy Division Cuts (Pic) 1.99
Joy Division — Atmosphere (Incredible! — Pic) 1.75
The Distractions — "You're Not Going Out Dressed Like That" (Pic) 1.50
Tubeway Army — Are Friends Electric (Import — Pic) 2.99
Gary Newman — Cars (Import — Pic) 2.99
Blondie — The Tide Is High (Import — Pic) 2.99
Cream — Wrapping Paper/Crossroads + 2 Tracks (Aussie Imp-Pic) 3.50
John Otway — 10" Birthday Boy + 2 Tracks 10" (US Imp—Pic) 1.75
Prag Vec — 6 Track French Import (Pic) 2.99
Spandau Ballet — The Freeze (Pic) 1.99

4 AD RECORDS / PRODUCT (LP's & 45's)

Bauhaus — In The Flat Field LP 3.99
Bauhaus — Telegram Sam/Terror Couple/Dark Entries (all Pic) each 96
Bauhaus — Rose Garden Funeral 12" (Pic) 1.60
Lewis/Gilbert — 3R4 LP 3.99
In Camera — IV Songs 12" (Pic) 1.75
In Camera — Final Achievement (Pic) 95
Cupol — Like This For Ages 12" (Pic) £1.75
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HUMAN RECORDS PRODUCT

As Pairs — Diet / It's Obvious. Excellent new single. NME SINGLE OF THE WEEK. (Pic)

Pic: Paul Cox/LFI

Is this the kind of Bag you'd let your wives or servants read?

THE NME STANDS TRIAL

Pass your sentences to Gasbag, NME, 5-7 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PG.

So it's true — Nick Kent is a scarecrow. Like our friend Worzel, does he have the ability to change heads? If so, the next time he reviews a Clash album I suggest he puts on his thinking head.
Ray Bolger, Land of Oz.
Well, so much for humour. And now. . . — PDN.

Directing fury at Mark Chapman might well be understandable as an immediate response to Lennon's murder, but it is both dangerous and misguided to allow ourselves to be blinkered, by this individual act, to the broader socio-political realities against which it occured. By doing so, we are playing into the hands of the CIA as we did before with Lee Harvey Oswald, and into the hands of right-wing extremists before that, with the burning of the Reichstag and the massacre of six million Jews. The Jews, Kennedy and Lennon are still dead, whatever happened to Hitler, Oswald or Chapman.

Let's not over-emphasis this case: the same things are happening every second of the day all over the globe — the family of Ulster policeman blown to bits last week loved him as much as, and more than, we can ever feel for a man whose innermost passions must always be essentially unfamiliar to the masses.

John Lennon's death was indeed a tragedy. But it was a tragedy brought about not by any individual, but by institutions and political structures which we have all become too scared to question. If we owe the man anything at all, we owe him a response which involves action and determination, and a straight-faced confession that we realise and understand how things got out of hand in the first place.

You don't have to be an influential pop star to do that.
Dave Yeats, Bromley, Kent.

So (as EJ Thribb, 17, would say), even good old *NME* has succumbed to the sycophantic media stance of 'Who can flatter John Lennon the most?' Even a week after his murder, *NME* still prints a Lennon tribute, Lennon photos and Lennon letters. Are you sure that some of the latter weren't composed by the *NME* journalists themselves, in a final (I hope) attempt at proving that *NME* cares about and loves murdered ex-Beatles more than any other paper?

I could hardly believe Julian Taylor's letter — "Why, four days on, does my head feel as if the bullets hit here and not a thousand miles away? . . . I loved him". Sure Julian — even though you'd never met him. So many people mistake sentimentalism for love.

Please stop this self-indulgent hypocrisy. John Lennon was not a god. He was a good singer/songwriter who cared about the human race. So do many other people but unfortunately they aren't as famous as Lennon.

Much is made of Lennon's profound philanthropy but not enlarged upon, only set down in vague terms (especially by the gutter press who willingly draw a veil over Lennon's socialist principles). If you really want to "try and do the same" as Lennon (to quote Neil Spencer) then for God's sake don't listen endlessly to his records and wail inconsolably.

Be positive: join CND, the Labour Party or Communist Party, go on unemployment/peace marches, read the papers to find out what's happening in the modern world and start campaigning for what Lennon and *you* (if all the tributes to Lennon are to be believed) wish to see.

If you try to cling to the '60s dream you're only burying your head in the sand. And if you can think no farther than 8 December 1980 then Lennon's aims will never be fulfilled and people like Thatcher will remain in the driving seat. Lennon is dead but life goes on — and we're all still very much alive.
Gillian Whitworth (Ms), Hyde, Cheshire.

Of course you're right — just a bit heartless. For Julian Taylor, Lennon's death meant real personal sadness. For Dave Yeates, it is the opportunity for a spot of cockeyed theorising. Of the two, I'll take Taylor's simple emotional response any day. NME's treatment of the event reflected a genuine, widely-held sense of loss, and if you don't share it then try and make allowances for those of us that do. Just skip the pages that bore you and we'll meet up at the end. Your remark about mistaking sentimentality for love, by the way, is simply bollocks. — PDN.

Is there any truth in the rumour that Julie Burchill once wrote an article that didn't include the words 'working class', 'London', 'Sex Pistols', 'good looking' or 'Motown'. I for one do not believe it.
Football Fan, Here In Dublin, Non-occupied Ireland.

Before you let Ms Burchill loose on Bruce at Wembley in March, can I be the first to contradict her and say that I have never spent such a marvellous four hours at a concert — best concert I'm never going to get allotted tickets to.
Spruce Ferntree, Asbury Park.

You bastards! You edited my letter in last week's issue so much I never even saw it.
de Capello, The Park, Gloucestershire.
It was still too long. — PDN.

Writing a feature on "bandes dessinees de France" (comic magazines, dummy) without talking about the magazine *A Suivre* is like talking about English rock papers without mentioning *NME!*

Eh, bien mes charmants lecteurs de *Metal Hurlant*, vous allez me repondre en Francais? C'est plus chique, non?
Mickey Mousette, Belgique.
Huh? — PDN.

A child when faced with another he doesn't understand, will feel threatened and in his defence will poke fun at the other. So to the case of *NME* and Dexy's Midnight Runners. Be realistic and constructive or don't mention them at all.
L. Thornton, Selly Park, Birmingham
As it happens I've got nothing but praise for Dexy's music. What turned me off was finding out you could be pompous and wear a woolly hat at the same time. — PDN.

The "illegal home-taping crime busters" will have a field day if they ever burst into my home. I have 48 cassette tapes full of recordings from the radio and from records which I've made up since '78 (and I'm continuing to do them). Is this a record? I'd be interested if other people wrote in and said how many they have.

'Click Click'!!
Unlawful Janice.

So you found the Toblerone — what about the four lollipops?
Andy Furr, St Albans, Herts.
P.S. 15 Years Ago: 'The River' by Ken Dodd!?!
Only in your caring, campaigning *NME* — the issues that really count. — PDN.

I am sorry to have to say this, but *NME* is not half the journal it used to be, a couple of years back.

I am glad that *NME* covers issues outside music, as a clear awareness of what is going on in society is very important, but quite a few of the writers in *NME* are coming over as pretentious pseuds who would not know music from baked beans.

Mind you, *NME* is still streets ahead of *Sounds* and *Record Mirror.* Both of these publications used to be quite good a few years back but now seem intent on stirring trouble up at gigs and on the streets by the stupid and pathetic articles that they publish. Their editors seem to have gone into a deep coma, and left the offices in charge of a load of headcases out to prove that they are all 'just one of the lads'.

Please, *NME* writers, make sure that your paper doesn't go the same way. We need at least one good weekly paper. But come on, review/interview more bands and musicians from a wider range of styles, because reading about the same boring types of bands in *NME* every week is just not on!

Still, 25p is worth it (I suppose!) just to read/look at what Lowry has done, as he seems to have a hell of a lot of sense, and nearly always cuts right to the heart of things, and gets rid of wordy bilge!
Listener to music, Telford.
Some fair points. But don't knock Heinz: 'Just Like Eddie' was a great record. — PDN.

I do not believe that music has an essence which you can usefully invoke to justify your criteria. Standards of judgement cannot be appropriate to a medium as such but only to particular ways of exploiting its opportunities. That is why the concept of popular music, presented in terms of demands, has stunted the useful growth of music criticism. Helpful criteria are more likely to be based on positive statements of value than on prohibitions.

To regard criticism positively, as a search for the most satisfactory definitions of function and value, allows an escape from academic systems of rules and requirements. Criteria then relate to claims which the critic can sustain rather than to demands which he must make. The clarification of standards should help to develop the disciplines of criticism without seeking to lay obligations on the musician.

Criticism is concerned with the interplay of available resources and desirable functions. It attempts to establish what the medium is good for. It cannot determine what is good for the medium, because the question is senseless. We cannot assess worth without indicating function.
P McCreeth, Preston, Lancs.
To be blunt, you sound epistemological. Pull yourself together. — PDN.

Well, it's Readers' Poll time again and we brace ourselves, ready to rack our brains to think of the most silly suggestion for a third of the categories.

Things haven't improved much since the first poll form I completed in 1967, when there were 15 categories, four of them being interchangeable with four others in a so-called 'World Section', and The Beatles and Elvis Presley dominated. There are now 21 categories and I personally feel that six or seven of them are a waste of time.

You know the ones I mean: Creep, Event, Most Wonderful, Other Instrument, Best Dressed, Haircut. Why not replace them with new categories, for example: Best Compilation, Best Reissue, Best Rock Book, Record Producer, and reinstate the Best Radio Show category.

Things have come to an all-time low when Margaret Thatcher has a strong chance of winning a poll category (and it won't be Female Singer)!
Ian Wakelam, Houghton Regis, Beds.

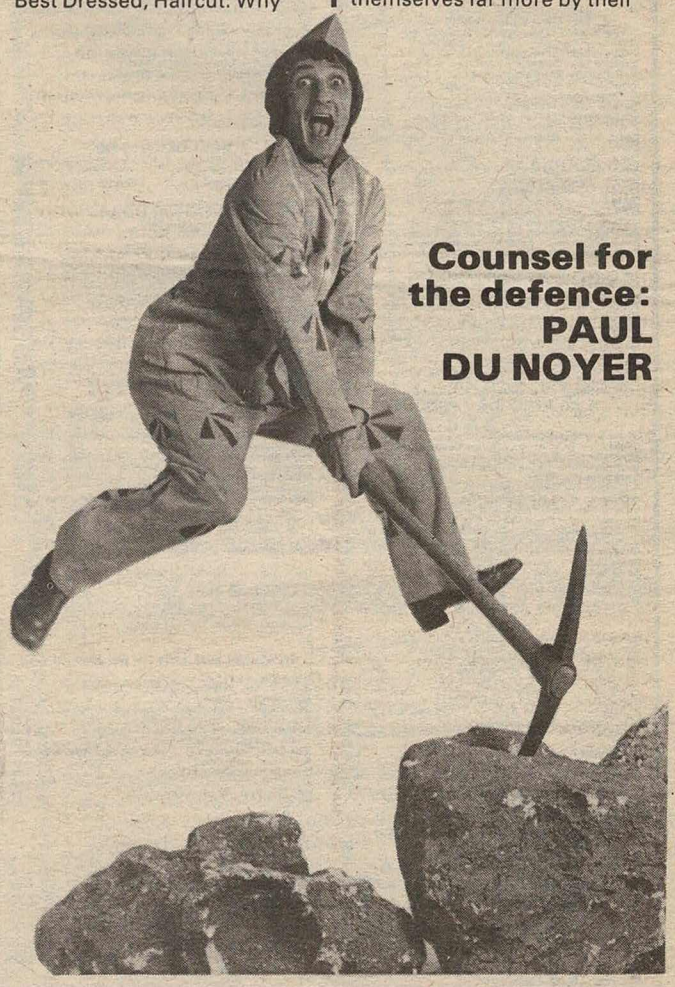
It's Thursday again and I have been left to do all the mechanics' work by myself. Because the other mechanic, Brian The Bald, is doing (sorry, trying to do) your bleeding crossword again.

I am getting pissed off with doing all the work every Thursday, so please could you make the crossword easier? Or better still, don't print the bloody thing at all.
Tude the Due, c/o G.Q. Defence, Bridgend, Wales.

Your interview with The Slits confirmed the fact that these frustrated 'women' are not only tasteless, but also thoroughly repulsive. If Ari Up screamed "I'm just the same as you!" at me, I would be inclined to argue the point with her.

I do not drop my knickers and have someone take pictures of the sordid little incident. All right, so The Slits object to the spurious Victorian idea of 'femininity', but surely they do not have to cross the line which separates human beings from animals to show their discontent.

What really makes me angry is that if a male artist ranted on at such boring length about similar male problems, and wrote the male equivalent to 'Girls And Their Willies' they would be instantly slagged off and accused of being sexist. Women in rock are debasing themselves far more by their



Counsel for the defence: PAUL DU NOYER

GASBAG

practically bestial activities than they have been debased by society in the past. The sooner The Slits realise that the vast majority of girls and women view then as little better than two-bit tarts, the better.
Karen Neville, Beaconsfield, Bucks.
I'm keeping well out of this one.—PDN.

Thought I'd write in with a few comments on your Xmas double edition. All in all you seem to be leading us into 1981 not knowing where you're going or, more importantly, where 'Rock' 'music' is going. Why, for starters, did you have to waste space on a Slits feature which was embarrassing in its prissiness? They've had since 1977 to improve, and the only thing that's grown is their collective egos and poor-little-rich- girl-I-know-all-the-right-people attitude.

Then you go and stick any old pictures in the 'Rock Photography' section and tell us they're the best of the year. You've done much better before.

Would you like some advice/New Year resolutions? *Stop* trying to build up some new and unsuspecting group into the "future of rawkenrawl" and then tear them down and/or wonder whey they haven't "made the grade/delivered the goods" when they achieve some modicum of success. The hackneyed, star creation orientated way you cover groups only serves to alienate them from their audience and ultimately to destroy them.

Stop trying to force new trends down our throats (I.E. Spondooliks Ballet) and let them stand or fall on their music instead of plus-or-minus sartorial elegance glitter chic. I know this point may be asking a lot, because vested interests and clothing manufacturers don't let you have a free hand, do they?
Phil Clarke, (the sorely neglected) Damn Latin fanzine. Or, David chucking stones at Goliath.
OK, wise guy, you get the plug. Seriously, have we ever *forced* Spandau Ballet down your throat? According to them, it's exactly the opposite. Moral: You can't bloody win. This answer has been vetted and approved by Hymie's High Class Garments Ltd. ("A vested interest in underwear since 1934"), Whitechapel Road, E.1. Trade enquiries welcomed. — PDN.

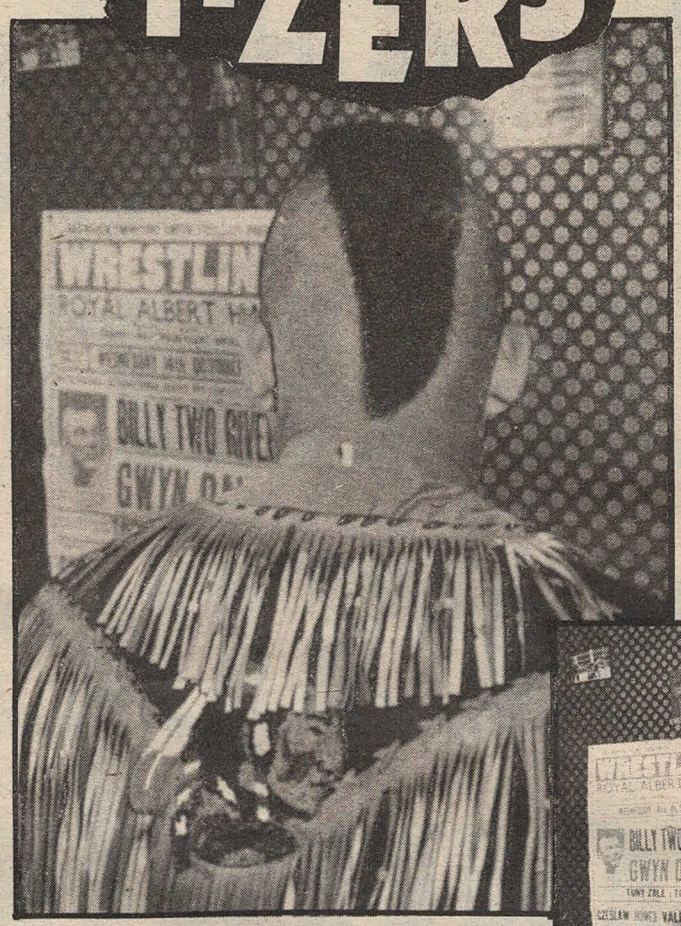
Since when has 'value' meant the same as 'price'? I refer of course to the cover of you Xmas issue which was misleadingly entitle 'Giant Sized Double Value Xmas Thing. Very witty.

Now since the last few issues have been 64 page jobs, when I saw the cover of this one I was delighted — a whole 128 pages for my 25p. Imagine my surprise when it not only cost twice as much as usual but also was a whole 16 pages bigger than normal. That seems to be to be a 'slightly bigger than usual, double price, half usual value Xmas rip-off'.

If you want to lie like this, it's entirely up to you. But don't expect to keep your readers.
Simon Orr, Woldingham, Surrey.
Steady on, nobody's lying to anyone. Once again, the answer is to count the number of actual *NME* pages, as opposed to adverts. Fair enough? —. PDN.

I would be happy to pay 50p for your wonderful publication every week.
Grovelling Creep, Shepperton.
You know, some of you out there could learn a thing or two from our friend Grovelling, here. — PDN.

T-ZERS



AND SO this week we're cutting down on the facts. Nyaah! Truth — who needs it? Yeah, this week's *T-Zers* page will be strictly heresay, mumbo-jumbo, crap, a little truth here and there and a helluva lot of good old fashioned Tom Pepper lyin'. We'll leave you to sort it out . . .

Like, we'll start with a real no-hoper. Somethin' that the dumbest most gullible jerkoff — get back in line all you Tories — couldn't swallow. Hey, **Mensi** is a rock singer by day but by night lectures in exterior design with particular and definite references to eighteenth century gay window frame structure. "I use the word gay in its traditional sense i.e. I sleep with members of my own sex" he said at his mock-Georgian retreat in frank Rotterdam. See? Lies are real easy. Compare them with boring old facks . . .

Pete Thomas of **The Attractions** somehow let his cigarette — a small cigar — wind its way into the pocket of **Madness** saxophonist **Lee Thompson** during the recent Birmingham do. Thompson — known to friends and Inland Revenue as **Kix** — then set about the wretched Thomas smiting him hip and thigh with the aid of two friends. Now then. It resulted that one of the four parties involved in this fracas became most beaten-up. Can you guess which one? We contacted Elvis' drummer at his sanitarium. "Ouch," he said. More! **Steve Naive** of the same Attractions has shaved his head. Yep, now he's a man of polish — mostly around his head. Less hair to comb but more face to wash etc . . .

Andy Blade — who was once in **Eater** with **Dee Generate** — is half Egyptian. (This is a fact.) Just prior to Christmas he received a letter from his semi-homeland beseeching him come do three years in the glorious Egyptian Army as entitled (free food, good pay, limited supply of regulation fezes). What's more, they would pay the airfare should he wish to come home and sign up! Andy replied "Nuttin doin, Abdul. The only camel dis guy's straddlin' come in packs o'twenny, so scoot huh?". Said Egypt: "Dat guy aint as smart as he sphinx" . . .

Time for another lie! Let's see. Oh yeah. The original title of **The Clash**'s three LP set was to have been 'Sandawicha!' after the band's investment in a chain of low-brow snack bars . . .

Abba's Agnetha Faltskog — such a pretty name — has been talking to various presses about life. Abba rarely talk to anyone — they're too busy filling shoe boxes with twenty pound notes, advertising Scholl sandals and winning Wimbledon with monotonous regularity. But Agnetha (pronounced aG-neeyet-HA) moped about her recent divorce from band leader **Sven Pornshop.** "So many things have changed since Abba's breakthrough. Happiness is now in different dimensions, like life. Everything is gone with the wind, the winner takes it all . . . the loser has nothing left for her," was but part of the dramatic transcript. Bemoaning her loss of privacy she intoned: "I am not permitted to be a normal bachelor girl. If I go out for dinner with a man there's trouble." Perhaps a reference to her passion for Klengens Fine Auld Stockholm Stout and its after effects . . .

More bounce-ups. **Brian Brain** is recovering from a rucus at a gig in The Hague where a stage monitor — which has little to do with **Neil Spencer** who was once a milk monitor — was smashed over his head. (Unbridled hooting from the cheaper seats.) Apparently in his efforts to whip up some atmosphere he dived into the crowd and set about some punk rockers who then proceeded to retaliate resulting in a riot resulting in said destruction of stage monitor and several sections of **Mrs Brain**'s son's cranium. His wounds will next be on at The Middlesbrough Rock Garden on January 10th. Whether Brian himself will show up is not clear . . .

PAUL WELLER to join **Spandau Ballet? Jam** frontman sighted in Blitz club sporting pith helmet, plus fours and carpet slippers. What gives Paul? "I feel it is every kid's right to reject the old order and frankly challenge traditional, bleak modes of dress. On top of which I get a tenner from **Bruce Foxton** if I keep this lot on till midnight." **Steve Strange,** bearded, duffle-coated, beer-gutted and resplendent in flared Wranglers, gym-shoes and sweat shirt emblazoned with "University Of Booze" commented: "He looks a right berk. All these layabout ginger beers are getting on my wick, like, speaking as an artist, like." True or false . . . ?

While all the rest of you were enjoying New Year's night spare a thought for the crowd gathered at The Tabernacle Notting Hill. On that night **Joe Strummer** — hotfoot from serving up toasted cheese and ham sandwiches all day — got onstage with various old **101ers** buddies and **Ramona** from **Mo-dettes** to sing old **James Brown** numbers plus the obligatory 'Keys To Your Heart'. Among the gathered crowd (**Alfie** and **Ciao Winkles**) was *NME*'s **Neil Spencer.** "What a gig!" he beamed, "what a gig. Mark my words this kind of happening could only take place on New Year's Eve when Pluto is in harmony with Capricorn and the house of Cancer is in full whack with the pie stall on Waterloo Bridge.

We hear through the grapevine (Nonsense! A Doctor Writes) that a bass player named **Charlie Anderson** and an organist named **Desmond** who apparently used to peddle their wares in a meaty little combo named **The Selecter** now do so in one named **The People.** A former **Specials** drummer named **Silverton** is "in on the act" and "laying down" some "heavy duty" "demos" in a Birmingham studio with another Special — **Lynval Golding** producing. Why anyone should wish to know this is beyond us, but . . .

FAR MORE interesting is the fact that **Howard Devoto** was sighted recently in a somewhat down-at-phal Curry Shop in Camberwell. The tired-and-emotional (Head waiter a **Mr Sanghi "Rick" Shaw** said: "Always this one with his ten pints of lager and a couple of chapati . . .") lemur-like Devoto was accompanied by current beau, busty local barmaid **Georgette** from The Silver Salver. Has Howard (real name: **Hereward Du Poco**) taken up residence in Camberwell's infamous Grove — already the roost for recently divorced man-about-6' 6" **Joe Jackson?**

Jackson himself turned in an impromptu session on the drumkit of an impromptu "band" turning in a "set" on New Year's Eve for the patrons of another South London drinking club. In a vain attempt to talk to the Jolly Camberwell Green Giant, *T-Zers* toppled from a drink laden table. "You auld long queen . . ." something Scottish shouted and a punchup broke out. Joe now nurses a pair of badly bruised knees . . .

The Stranglers, in a concerted attempt to dust off their "bad boys of rock" public image are now demanding such things of gig promoters as "one bowl of children's sweets" and a "dustbin full of ice". Even this doesn't seem to be working, as rumour has it that strange, ritualistic Icelandic paedophiliac practices are not outside certain group members' experience . . .

Following our report in last week's *T-zers,* the column read by the stars about his work with **Dennis "Blackbeard" Bovell** e optional), **Marvin Gaye** himself rang *T-zers* desk to say that Blackbeard has been employed not as a producer of his latest single but as an engineer. He also said there was no question of his having chased DB around London to secure the Dubmaster's services.

"I wasn't even sure what this whole dub thing was," quoffed the Motown Marvel in his dapper tones. There's still no release date set for Marvin's 'Super Ego' single . .

Nice to see the *News Of The World*'s "Pop" correspondent with her finger on the pulse of what's what and not in "Our Wee World". *Paula Yates* (for it is she of the incredibly engrossing *Rock Stars On Their Lavatories* tome) tips **Glen Matlock**'s band **The Spectres** as a "Hoteroonie Fer Surie In Eighty One" seemingly ignorant of the *fact* that they are no more. Or, to be *factual* about this — they are only Matlock and **A Drummer.** Matlock is at present playing in **Nick Kent**'s new band **The Ex Sex Pistols** . . .

And finally, sticking with this insectuous tale, *T-Zers* wish to correct a misleading myth concerning Nick (see feature pages 34 — 54 in this week's issue) and idols he has modelled himself on. ***Lou Reed*???** In private moments, amongst friends, with a glass of Bailey's and a fat Havana, Nick will confess undying adolation for none other than . . . **Meatloaf!!!**

DROP EVERYTHING! The Polecats have signed for Phonogram!! PICK EVERYTHING BACK UP AGAIN!!!

ARCHIVE FUN

The First Of The Mohicans

WHEN James Fenimore Cooper penned his Western potboiler *The Last Of The Mohicans* at the end of the 19th Century he could not have known that the tribe would re-emerge again somewhere in the vicinity of Camden Town towards the latter half of the 20th. In the celebration of current Blitzkreig, we take pleasure in uncovering the style's original precursor, wrestler Billy Two Rivers, star of early '60s ring. Hailing from the reservation of Ashton in Bristol, where the Severn and Avon intersect, hence his name, Mr Two Rivers was greatly beloved of television viewers during his heyday, when alongside Jackie "Mr TV" Pallo, Johnny Czeslaw, Ben Grimm and others he demonstrated his acting skill before an audience otherwise anticipating *The Adventures Of Robin Hood.* Meanwhile, we await a further flood of fringed fashions when Scorcese's new boxing epic *Raging Bull* — or was that *Raging Sitting Bull?* — breaks at the post-Christmas box office.

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3.	(2)	Ant Music 20p
4.	(—)	Jam — Pop Art 20p
5.	(—)	Ants — No. 3 20p
6.	(3)	Jam Start 20p
7.	(9)	Dead Kennedys — Cambodia 20p
8.	(—)	Siouxsie — Kaliedoscope 20p
9.	(10)	Ants — No. 2 20p
10.	(—)	The Beat — Stand Down Margret 20p

New Releases (20p) (NB + 15p P&P)

Passions — The Swimmer, Vision Collision, The Dogs, Little Bob Story, Selecter — Too Much Pressure, UB40, Bowie — Ashes To Ashes, Adicts, New Slits, Siouxsie — Kaleidoscope, Ski Patrol, Carpettes, Au-Pairs, Meteors, Black Slate, Royal Rasses, Mo-Dettes — Story So Far, This Heat, Health & Efficiency, Studio 1, Girls At Our Best, Brian Brain, The Demons, The Petticoats, New Cabaret Voltaire, New Essential Logic, Scientists

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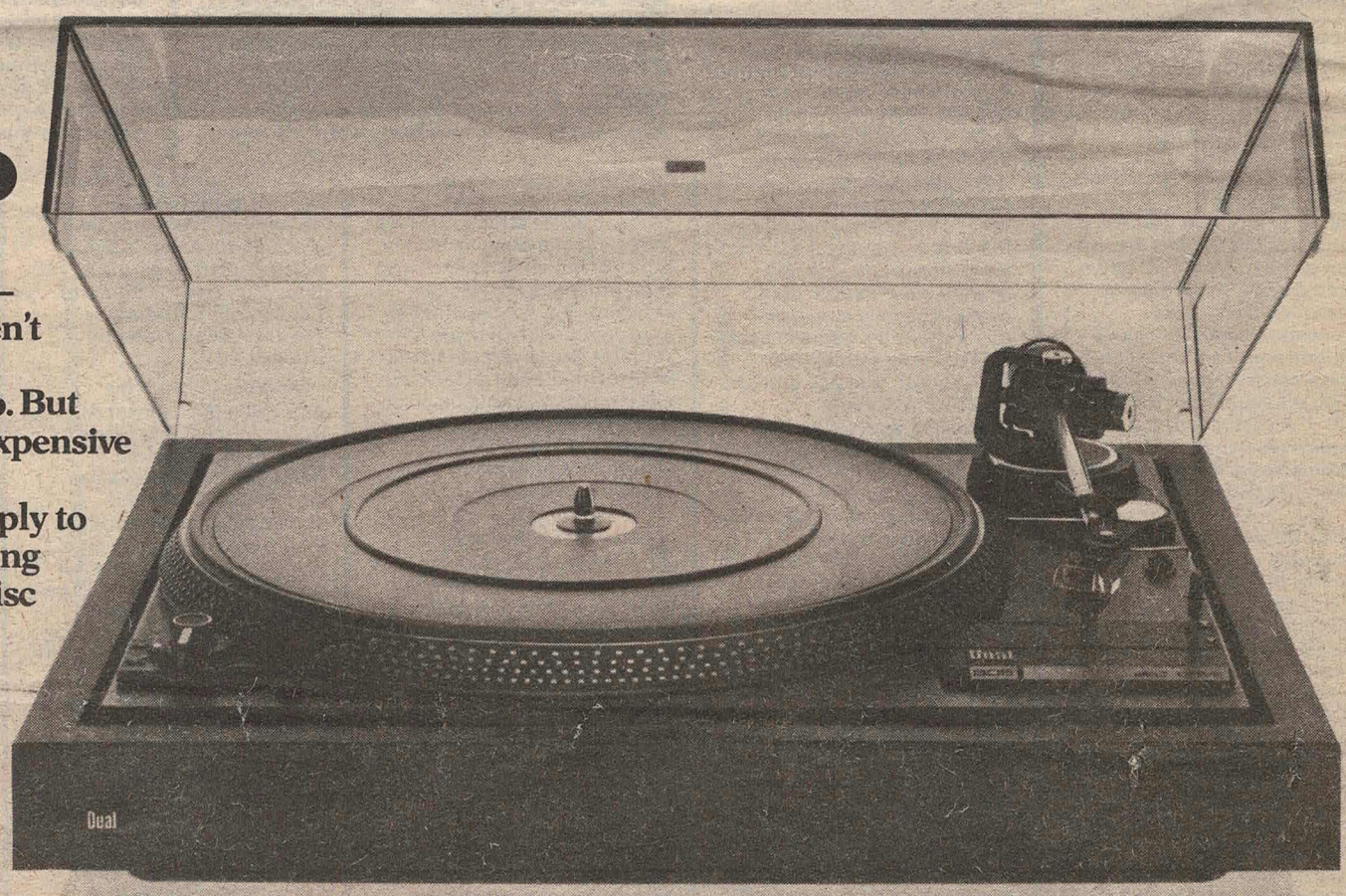

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